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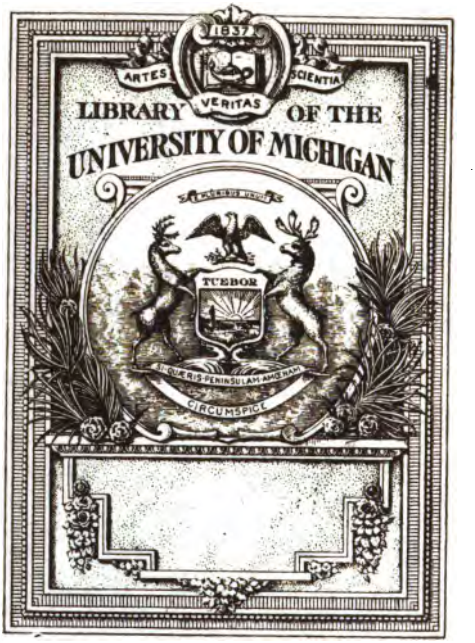

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THE BIBLE FOR HOME AND SCHOOL

SHAILER MATHEWS, GENERAL EDITOR

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DEUTERONOMY

W. G. JORDAN

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THE BIBLE FOR HOME AND SCHOOL

COMMENTARY

ON

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

BY

W. G. JORDAN, B.A., D.D.

PROFESSOR OF HEBREW AND OLD TESTAMENT LITERATURE
IN QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, KINGSTON, CANADA

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TO THE MEMORY

OF

GEORGE MONRO GRANT

WHO FOR TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AS PRINCIPAL OF

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, CANADA, RENDERED

FAITHFUL SERVICE IN THE CAUSE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

THIS VOLUME

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

THE BIBLE FOR HOME AND SCHOOL is intended to place the results of the best modern biblical scholarship at the disposal of the general reader. It does not seek to duplicate other commentaries to which the student must turn. Its chief characteristics are (*a*) its rigid exclusion of all *processes*, both critical and exegetical, from its notes; (*b*) its presupposition and its use of the assured results of historical investigation and criticism wherever such results throw light on the biblical text; (*c*) its running analysis both in text and comment; (*d*) its brief explanatory notes adapted to the rapid reader; (*e*) its thorough but brief Introductions; (*f*) its use of the Revised Version of 1881, supplemented with all important renderings in other versions.

Biblical science has progressed rapidly during the past few years, but the reader still lacks a brief, comprehensive commentary that shall extend to him in usable form material now at the disposition of the student. It is hoped that in this series the needs of intelligent Sunday School teachers have been met, as well as those of clergymen and lay readers, and that in scope, purpose, and loyalty to the Scriptures as a foundation of Christian thought and life, its volumes will stimulate the intelligent use of the Bible in the home and the school.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1
I. NAME AND CONTENTS	1
II. ITS PLACE IN HEBREW HISTORY AND LITERATURE	2
1. Hebrew Literature	2
2. The Pentateuch and Hexateuch	3
3. The Relation of D to the other Documents	5
4. Ancient Legal Codes	6
a. The Code of Hammurabi	6
b. The Yahwist Decalogue	7
c. The Book of the Covenant	7
d. Deuteronomy	8
e. The Priestly Legislation and the Holiness Code	8
5. Influence of Deuteronomy on the other Books	9
III. ITS ORIGIN, CHARACTER, AND PURPOSE	10
1. Josiah's Law-book	11
2. The Character of the Book	13
3. Its Purpose	16
IV. THE FUNDAMENTAL IDEA AND THE FUNDAMENTAL LAW	17
a. The Fundamental Idea; the one supreme God	19
b. The Fundamental Law; the one central Sanctuary	19
(1) Sacrifice and Profane Slaughter	20
(2) The Cities of Refuge	21
(3) The Levites	21
(4) The Administration of Justice	23
V. ITS RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE AND PERMANENT INFLUENCE	24
VI. THE ANALYSIS OF DEUTERONOMY	28
VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY	32
THE COMMENTARY	35
APPENDIX	259
INDEX	261

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DEUTERONOMY

W. G. JORDAN

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INTRODUCTION

I. Name and Contents of Deuteronomy

For those who desire to understand fully the growth of Hebrew religion and the origin of Judaism, the Book of Deuteronomy is of the very greatest interest and importance. The three most powerful and aggressive religions of the world, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, are closely related to the Old Testament; and in the Sacred Canon there is no book of larger historical importance and deeper spiritual significance than this. The name is due to a mistaken translation of a particular text, and yet it turns out, as we shall see, to be wonderfully appropriate. In the Greek version of 17:18 the phrase "a copy of this law" is rendered "this *deuteronomion*," which means this *second law*, hence the name Deuteronomy, just as we use "Deutero-Isaiah," for a second writer of the Isaiah school, or a second part of the book of Isaiah. The Jews sometimes used this name, though it was their usual custom to take the first words of a book as its title; in this case, *these words* or simply *words*. Modern versions give it the heading: The Fifth Book of Moses.

In its present form, this book has a slightly dramatic or rather oratorical structure, arising from the fact that all its parts are related to the person of Moses. All its varied material, except the last chapter, which contains the narrative of his death, appears as the deliverances of the great Hebrew leader. On closer examination, this may turn out to be superficial, but it is the first thing that we have to take note of in considering the form and structure of the book. The first three chapters contain an historical retrospect delivered by Moses to the assembled host of

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Israel. This is followed by various exhortations (4), an account of the giving of the Ten Words at Horeb (5), and the Great Exhortation, expounding the central truth of Hebrew religion, and calling for intelligent faith and consistent obedience (6–11). In the body of the book (12–26) we have the Deuteronomic Code given by Moses "this day" (11:32). In Chapter 27 Moses gives commands that are to be carried out after the crossing of the Jordan; and in the closing chapters of the book, along with a slight narrative, there are exhortations, a song, and a series of oracles, all attributed to the great soldier and legislator. As these speeches and laws are, later on in this Introduction, examined from various points of view, and a full analysis is given at the close, this brief account of the contents and structure may here suffice. To introduce oneself or another to a book means to set it in its true place in history, so that it may receive light from preceding events, and throw light on those that followed. This task is difficult, and cannot be perfectly accomplished, but it yields rich rewards to all our diligent and sympathetic toil.

II. Its Place in Hebrew History and Literature

Hebrew Literature. Hebrew history and literature, so far as they are the direct concern of the Old Testament student, cover a space of a little over twelve centuries, from the Mosaic period, or the entrance of the people into Palestine, until the beginning of the Christian Era. During the greater part of this time their literature was in process of growth. We know now that writing and literature are very much older than the Hebrew people, and we can no longer regard the Bible as the most ancient specimen of Oriental history and legislation. This literature begins with particular narratives or poems, such as Gen. 2; 3; 11; Judg. 5:11; 2 Sam. 1:19 ff.; Deut. 33, which are afterwards taken up into larger collections, embracing a more extensive period of history. Thus, it has passed through three stages:

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first that of creation, second that of compilation and expansion, and third that of fixed canonical condition. In the last period, which extends from the first century of our era to the present time, a severe and consistent attempt has been made to hand down the text in a stereotyped, changeless form. Parts of the Canon no doubt received their final form much earlier. The Law, understanding by this word, as in the later Jewish sense, the first five books of the Old Testament, began to reach a canonical position about a century after the Exile. In the third century B.C. it was carefully translated into Greek for the Jews of Alexandria, and copied afterwards with increasing care and rigidity. During the two preceding periods, embracing nearly a thousand years, the literature was growing and its forms changing. In fact, these two earlier periods are not distinct, but overlap, the creations of one age being joined to those of a later time, and the contributions of a distant period rearranged and modified to meet later needs. There are scarcely any books in the Old Testament that appear before us now in precisely the same form as that in which the narratives came from the hands of the original authors. Later and smaller books, such as Ezekiel or Joel and Jonah, approach most nearly to this condition.

The Pentateuch or Hexateuch. Deuteronomy takes its origin from a period (621 B.C.) that stands about midway between the two points of time which are assigned to the beginning and end of Hebrew nationality (1250 B.C. to 68 A.D.) and consequently has relations with a great part of the Old Testament, but its connection with the Pentateuch, of which it forms an important section, calls for consideration first. It is possible to speak of the Hexateuch, that is, the first six books of the Bible, as forming a unity, seeing that there runs through them a continuous thread of history from the creation of the world to the conquest of Palestine, and the same literary sources are used throughout. It is also allowable to regard the Pentateuch as being in even a stricter sense a unity, for we now know

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that the documents in question extend beyond the book of Joshua, and that they were put together in that book in a manner different from that which was employed in the earlier books. We have, then, in the Pentateuch a volume that has been divided into five parts (note the close connection between Gen. and Exod., Lev. and Num.), and that deals with the following subjects: the creation of the world and man, the spreading of the earliest races, the rise of the patriarchal families, the deliverance from Egypt, the revelation at Sinai (Horeb), the wanderings in the wilderness, the legislation given in the land of Moab, and the death of Moses.

After long, laborious investigation this material has been divided by scholars into four main documents, the result of slow growth, and therefore capable of further analysis. It is only the barest outline of this important subject that can be attempted here. We have (1), the Yahwist document, denoted by the symbol J.[1] This is believed to be the earliest. Its style is vivid and picturesque, and, speaking generally, its religious ideas are more primitive than those of the other documents, good specimens of its character in both these respects being Genesis 2 and 3, and 11 : 1–9. This is called by many the Judean prophetic narrative. (2) E, the Elohist document (from Elohim, the Hebrew name of God, used in the earlier portions) which begins in the story of Abraham and comes down into the historical books. (3) D, used here of Deuteronomy as a whole, but which will receive more detailed consideration. (4) P, The Priestly Code, a document that is concerned largely with the Levitical Legislation, but having a slight historical framework and beginning with the first chapter of Genesis. The order in which they have been named is that in which they are supposed to have come into existence, covering a period ranging from the ninth to the fifth centuries B.C. Individual elements no

[1] For analysis of Genesis on these lines consult Dr. Mitchell's Commentary in this series.

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doubt existed earlier, and particular parts may have been added later. Thus, the so-called *document* is not the work of one man, but the production of a school. An early document may have received later additions, while a late one may contain very early material, so that, taken altogether, they represent a continuous development. There is no reason to marvel at this complexity, for it is not to be expected that the varied life of a progressive nation, and the most earnest endeavors of its greatest men can be expressed in a simple formula.

The Relation of D to the other Documents. At present we must confine our attention to the narrative portions, as the nature of Deuteronomy demands that separate and special attention be paid to the legal codes. It has been shown conclusively that D is based upon the earlier documents J and E to which we may now refer in their combined form as JE. The result, as worked out in critical commentaries and elaborate introductions is *that D shows the closest dependence upon JE, but no trace of connection with P.* Reference has been made in the notes to double traditions (1 : 36), but it needs fuller illustration as it is a fact of central significance. In order to deal sympathetically with the suggestion of Mosaic authorship which clings to Deuteronomy in its earliest stages, we do well to remember, not only the ancient custom of sheltering new contributions under the protection of venerable names, but also the fact that much of this material was even then in existence in the form of narratives and laws that had grown up round the great name of Moses. The striking thing in this connection is that it is possible to take a chapter in Exod. or Num., after its parts have already been analysed according to thought and style into JE and P sections, and to examine their relation to D *with the result, even where JE and P are now closely intertwined, that the contact of D is always with JE, and not with P.* This is particularly true of the two historical retrospects (1 : 6–3 : 29 and 9 : 8–10 : 11). The name of the sacred Mount,

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Horeb, is found in D and E, while P uses *Sinai*. The *oath* mentioned in 1:8 is peculiar to JE; the account of the sending out of the spies (1:22) agrees with JE so far as the two statements can be compared. Now, however, we are not so much concerned with this as a process of proof for the present position, as with the fact that the histories in our book are not the pure product of the seventh century, but a re-editing of preëxisting material. To illustrate this fact we need take only two passages in Deuteronomy which are fair samples of many similar ones.

"And Yahweh said, 'Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves; they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image.'" (Deut. 9:12.)

"And Yahweh spoke unto Moses, saying, 'Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves; they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten calf.'" (Exod. 32:7–8.)

"And I took hold of the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands, and brake them before your eyes." (Deut. 9:17.)

"And Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount." (Exod. 32:19b.)

Practically all that the Deuteronomic writer has done has been to change his material from the form of a narrative into that of a speech. Thus the speeches of Moses in Deuteronomy are compiled from other and, in many cases, earlier records.

Ancient Legal Codes. The legislation in Deuteronomy, like its histories, cannot be considered alone as it has relations to other collections of Laws that are similar in character. The oldest code known is that of Hammurabi, who was king of Babylonia about 2200 B.C. or about a

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thousand years earlier than the time of Moses. This code has naturally many points of contact with the narratives and laws of the Israelites. It differs in being a legislation that meets the needs of a more complicated situation, as to commerce and civilization, than that of the Hebrew people, but many of its principles are the same, though it lacks the noble view of God, the lofty appeals to history, and the clear humanitarian strain that are characteristic of Deuteronomy.

"If a man has stolen the son of a free-man, he shall be put to death" has a parallel in Deut. 24:7; Exod. 21:16. "If he has shattered a gentleman's limb, one shall shatter his limb" is found in company with other laws that literally demand "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" (Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21; Matt. 5:38). The question of Babylonian influence on the Israelites[1] cannot be considered here, but the significant fact of the early existence of such a code must be noted.

Next in order comes the Yahwist decalogue contained in Exod. 34. It is well known that in early times, before the existence of elaborate written codes, it was customary to arrange such laws in series of fives or tens as a help to the memory. This cannot be clearly made out now in the case of Exod. 34:14 ff. (J), where there are thirteen commands, but it is probable that it once existed. It should be noted that these laws are of what we would call a ritualistic character, and that there are many points of contact, both in substance and words, between these ordinances and the laws of Deuteronomy.

The Book of the Covenant (Exod. 20:22–23:33 (E)) is a legislative code suited to a simple, peasant people. There are ritual observances natural to an agricultural community, laws for the protection of life and property, and a beginning shown of the humanitarian spirit that is more fully manifested in the legislative sections of our book.

[1] The present writer has discussed this in a volume entitled *Biblical Criticism and Modern Thought.*

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The points of contact between it and Deuteronomy are so many, and so important, that the latter has been called "an enlarged edition of the Book of the Covenant." The two copies of "The Decalogue" (Exod. 20 and Deut. 5) appear now in a Deuteronomic framework; the original form goes back to an earlier time, and was no doubt much simpler. Short forms of prohibitions, as "Thou shalt not steal," were common in an early non-literary age, and they were interpreted at first in a narrow, tribal sense. Read in the richer light of the prophetic teaching, this decalogue may well be regarded as laying the foundations of social morality.

The legislation in Deut. occupies about one-third of the whole book, and, as is shown in the commentary, it deals with a great variety of subjects. It is based upon these earlier codes, and bears no direct trace of the Priestly Legislation, though at some points these two codes may have come in contact with common material. The laws contained in Deut. 12–26 will receive in this Introduction a more careful survey.

The Priestly Legislation and the Holiness Code. The history and legislation denoted by the symbol P is a complex literature belonging to the priestly school, and now embedded in the books from Gen. to Num. The laws in Leviticus show that its chief interest is in the position of the priests and the more elaborate ritual of the temple. The theology that lies behind it is advanced, in that there is a clear recognition of the one transcendent God; the ideas of sin expressed in the ritual are of a fully developed character, and imply the prophetic teaching as to the sin of the nation. The fact of one central sanctuary, for which the Deuteronomic reformers had to fight, is here assumed as something that has always existed. This document has very little contact with Deut. Only very small fragments were inserted by later editors when the final arrangement of the five books was made; *e.g.* 1:3; 32:48–52; 34:1a, 7–9.

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The Holiness Code, or H, is a part of the larger whole included under the symbol P and contained mainly in Lev. 17–26. The section has a special character. It may have been the first part of the Priestly Legislation to be codified, and hence may be contemporaneous with the later parts of Deut. There are points of contact between H and D, but even when similar subjects are treated, it is with such difference of expression as to make it clear that the kind of dependence proved to exist between D and JE does *not* exist in this case.

The Influence of Deut. on other Parts of the Literature. Judges is a clear case of a book containing very early material set in a Deuteronomic framework. Here we have narratives of the most primitive character used to illustrate the later philosophy of history, viz. that national calamities are the punishment of religious apostasy, and that success comes as the reward of sincere repentance. The other historical books, except Chronicles, which reflects the view of the later priestly school, show constant signs of Deuteronomic influence. It has been proved beyond dispute that these historical records were edited at a time when the influence of Deuteronomy was fresh and powerful. (Consider carefully Josh. 23.) The book of Jeremiah comes from the same period as that to which Deuteronomy is assigned, and it is therefore natural that there should be many resemblances in thought and style. Jeremiah was a man of strong character and original powers of thought, but, living in the time of the Deuteronomic reformers, he would move to some extent in the same circle of ideas. Every school has its dangers, and this particular danger of attaching too much importance to external reforms is one against which Jeremiah would be likely to contend with all the energy of a sensitive, spiritually minded man. The explanation of the close resemblance in style between Deuteronomy and the prose passages of Jeremiah is, probably, that the writings of that great prophet have come down to us through editors of the Deuteronomic school.

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All that has, so far, been presented in such a bald form serves to illustrate the fact that Deuteronomy is a book that has close relations of dependence upon, and influence over, not a few of the most important parts of the Old Testament. To understand this we need to consider the origin, character, and purpose of the book.

III. Its Origin, Character, and Purpose

The Israelites came into Palestine about 1250 B.C. They took possession of the land gradually, and the first two or three centuries, as represented by the book of Judges, is a time of struggle under conditions that are rough, and unfavorable to national unity. Even then the belief in Yahweh is a living force to bind them together for a while, and inspire them to heroic efforts. About 1000 B.C., after some unsuccessful efforts in the same direction, David, by the power of his personality and gifts of leadership, welds the tribes into one kingdom and chooses Jerusalem as the political capital and the centre of religious worship. This condition, however, comes to an end, and seventy years later, when the seeds of corruption and dissension sown during Solomon's showy reign begin to bear fruit, a division takes place, and a new kingdom is formed under Jeroboam, with its capital at Samaria. The northern kingdom is at first the stronger of the two in numbers, wealth, and political power, but after two centuries of restless life, marked by religious quarrels and political factions, it falls before the might of Assyria in 721. From that time the Kingdom of Judah becomes the bearer of the ancient tradition, and any remains that survive of the rich, attractive Israelite literature have been preserved for posterity by the loving care of the Jewish Church.

The demand for social righteousness, and the protest against a showy, sensuous ritual made in the North by Hosea and Amos, were continued in the Kingdom of Judah by such men as Isaiah and Micah. As early as the days

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of King Hezekiah, perhaps soon after the fall of Samaria in 721, some ineffectual efforts towards religious reform seem to have been made (2 Kgs. 18:4, 22). But the desires and hopes of pious men were disappointed; "they looked for the Messiah and got Manasseh." The period immediately following was a time of reckless reaction. The influence of Assyria was strong in religion as well as in politics, and many of the ancient Canaanite superstitions were revived, and threatened the very life of the highest Hebrew religion. In those long weary days of waiting there were still many noble men who had not bowed the knee to Baal, and in the early years of the reign of the young Josiah they made their influence felt.

Josiah's Law-book. In 2 Kgs. 22 we read a striking story which tells how a book was found in the temple, a book destined to have an immense influence; when it was read before the king it struck terror into his heart; after it had been confirmed by the prophetess Huldah, it was made the basis of a great reformation. It is now generally accepted that the book found in the temple was none other than Deuteronomy in its original form. Whether the "finding" was accidental, or is another way of saying that it had been presented as a message from God, it is likely that the composition took place not long before this time (621), the authors, as we have seen, using earlier material for the laws, the narratives, and speeches. It was evidently a short book that could be read through in a comparatively brief time, and to produce such an effect it must have contained exhortations, warnings, and threatenings as well as laws. The kind of reformation attempted by Josiah and his helpers, as well as the celebration of the Passover in his reign, agree with the demands of Deuteronomy. (See 12:3; 16:2, 21.) Thus it is clear that the book comes into the actual life of Israel towards the close of the seventh century, produces an immediate sensation, and leaves an abiding mark on the nation's literature and life. The main part of what we now possess in 6–26, 28

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probably formed what is called the Law-book of Josiah. We know that the book had a great influence in the sphere of politics and religion, and, therefore, must have given sharp stimulus to literary activity. In those days an edition did not mean a number of copies turned out from the printing-press, each an exact replica of the other. Every copy might have slight differences, and it was natural to have different introductions and conclusions with different editions, and the result in our copy, which did not receive its final form until some generations later, is the preservation of diverse elements gathered together by members of this school. While there is considerable agreement on the point that the "kernel" of Deut. is the twenty-two chapters mentioned above, there is difference of opinion on some small details; hence we have to use a variety of signs to symbolize a process which we cannot here follow out minutely. D is used for the original form of the book; D^2 for another introduction which may at one time have been joined to the legislative part of the book; D^S means larger sections belonging to this school, but probably not appearing in the first edition; D^E denotes those parts which, by a considerable consensus of critical opinion, are assigned to the Exile; while D^R has been used not for any particular redactor or edition, but for the annotators who added explanatory notes or harmonistic links. The other documentary symbols have, of course, the same meaning here as elsewhere. In this commentary where *processes* are not allowed, there are many questions of detail that must remain untouched; this is the less to be regretted when the aim is merely to give a broad outline of the contents and meaning of an ancient book, as in many cases these questions cannot be solved. When the questions are asked with regard to 1:1, 2, "What desert is meant?" "Has Suph any connection with the Red Sea?" "Is Paran the desert or the locality?" (1 Kgs. 11:18) and so on through Laban, Hazeroth, and Di-zahab, one has to answer, who knows? Useful knowledge is incidentally

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acquired by the study of such things, but it is not absolutely essential in our effort to grasp the spiritual significance of the book.

Ambitious and ingenious attempts have been made to divide the book, the speeches as well as the legislation, into sources according to the use of the singular or plural form of address, "thou" or "you." These have caused considerable discussion, and though the results have not met with general approval, they have thrown light upon some points of detail in regard to language and structure. While this test is too slight and variable to bear all the weight that has been placed upon it, help may be derived from it in separating particular passages or smaller collections of laws when it exists along with other criteria.

The Character of the Book. Deuteronomy in its original form may be described as a Great Sermon and a Popular Law-book. In the form in which we now possess it this description suits fairly well, for there is little in it that cannot be brought under these two heads. The speeches and the song have this sermonic character, and an attempt has been made to turn the historical material of the first introduction into this form. By the term *popular* as here used an effort is made to convey the impression that the legislation does not consist of a code or guide-book for the priests who have charge of the ritual. It is a broad appeal to the nation, as a whole, to bring its sacred services and general conduct into harmony with the divine requirements, and so become "a holy nation." These laws are therefore presented in a persuasive form, with motives and reasons from life and history. Some of the paragraphs of the "Code" consist largely of exhortations to avoid contact with heathen practices, and to cherish brotherliness within the community. Many of the laws also have an ideal character, their purpose and effect being more to express a theological aim and religious ideal, than to control actual facts of life. The central thoughts will perhaps be more appropriately considered when we have set forth the

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purpose of the book; meanwhile, remarks of a more general character may help to recreate the atmosphere in which the writers move.

It is evident that such a book does not belong to the beginning of the nation's life, for one of its most marked features is the way in which its history is treated as an object of study, and interpreted in the light of prophetic teaching. The writers have no new facts to give us; almost every statement can be paralleled from the older records; that which is *new* is the treatment of history. The earlier narrations of the Pentateuch are only slightly touched by reflection, and have little theology in the stricter sense of that term. Here it is different. Our authors are religious thinkers rather than story-tellers. The story in itself is subordinate to the idea; and the history is treated, not for its own sake, nor for the attractiveness of its incidents, but as the revelation of certain great truths concerning the character of Israel's God in his relation to the nation. The inspiration of the book is seen in its clear, first-hand recognition of this great truth. The story of the past is the story of God's creation and training of a nation for noble ends. We do not here quite reach the height that is attained in Deutero-Isaiah (Isa. 42: 1–4), when the prophet sees that the end of this training is not complete in Israel itself, but has a beneficent aim towards the world at large. But we are now on the way to that conception of election, as a call to world-wide service, which is the loftiest thought of pre-Christian theology. Looking at one side only, we might suppose that the "intolerance" of Deuteronomy was quite opposed to any such missionary idea, but on the other side, the lofty monotheism of our book, even if not yet *absolute*, is the essential preparation for any real missionary service.

Thus, we reach another definition of the character of the book; it is a noble blending of the best elements of the prophetic and priestly activities in the religion of Israel. The fact that it is so difficult to decide whether we ought

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to ascribe the book to one circle or the other teaches us that we must not separate too widely these two religious forces. There were noble priests as well as great prophets. In the earliest days there was not such a large difference between the work of prophets and priests; and while men like Amos, Isaiah, and Micah criticised the vain worship and social corruptions of their times, they did not imagine that law and ritual could be dispensed with altogether. In this book, then, meant to meet certain very definite national needs, an attempt is made to reduce to practical form, as a working creed and a moral guide, the teaching of the great prophets. In post-Exilic Judaism, when the priestly legislation was elaborated to cover every detail of worship, there was not much room for prophetic influence, but even then it was not possible to compress the life of a living nation into narrow bounds; and if Deuteronomy, with its demand for conformity to an objective standard, began the work of repression, it contained in itself, in part at least, some healing for the wounds that it made, as it laid stress on study, and in a certain sense gave rise to the school (synagogue). In the meantime the creative period has not come to a close. We are in the broad stream of a great progressive movement, and can recognize that in this fateful period many inspired men, seeking the good of their own nation, are preparing large blessings for the life of the world. Here Hosea's thought of the love of Yahweh for his people and the tender relationship between the two find varied expression in history, sermon, and law. The strong demand for social righteousness — fairness between man and man, impartial administration of justice and manifestation of kindness to the needy — which was presented in such powerful, passionate appeals by the great prophets, is here provided with historical justification and reduced to specific laws. The strong humanitarian strain in the book, shown in the slightly improved position of women, the care of the Levites, widows, orphans, and sojourners, even including the brute beasts, is no doubt

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traceable to this source. The result is a book of varied character which, in the name of loyalty to Yahweh, demands not only correct worship, but also a national life based upon the idea of brotherhood, and calling for mutual helpfulness.

The Purpose of the Book. This was, as we have already seen, to produce a religious reformation, and we know from the testimony of the historians and prophets of this period that there was great need for such a movement. The Israelites did not bring with them into Palestine a completely finished ritual and code of laws. Their laws, largely a matter of custom, were few and simple, as was also their ritual, which was based on tradition, and varied as to time and place. The primitive altar of earth could be built and used in any place where God manifested himself (Exod. 20: 24). In the period of the Judges there were many local altars and a wide variety of religious practice; in this respect also "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judg. 21: 25). Even thus early there may have been an attempt towards centralization and monarchy, associated with the popular cry, "the sword of Yahweh and of Gideon." In the days of Samuel the offering of sacrifice was not confined to one place, but the sanctuary at Shiloh held a prominent position. When David established his capital at Jerusalem, and brought the ark there, the long eventful history of that city began. It must at once have become a sacred place for the tribe of Judah, but the schism and its results showed that the ancient sanctuaries of the North, from Bethel to Dan, had retained much of their prestige and attractiveness. All through these times of political struggle there was danger that the religion of the Hebrew people would become weak and corrupt, altogether like that of their neighbors. Elijah, one of the greatest men in the pre-literary period, fought with fierce heroism against the encroachments of the Tyrian Baal. He contended against a foreign religion, and denounced

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the creed of Ahab, but he had nothing to say about a *single* altar, his cry being, "They have broken down *thine altars*." There may have been a desire for centralization about two centuries later after the ruin of the Northern Kingdom, but the real struggle for reform came in the reign of Josiah when the comparative smallness of the country rendered it possible. Elijah denounced the worship of a *foreign* god; Amos and Isaiah denounced the giving to Yahweh worship that was fit only for small heathen gods. But the *place of worship* did not occupy a large part of their thoughts. Now, however, pious men have come to the conclusion that these rural sanctuaries are the source of all religious corruption, and that the worship of the One God, in pure, decent forms, can only be carried on with safety at one central, sacred place. They may learn afterwards that even this place may become a centre of impure worship and narrow bigotry, but in the meantime they press forward to their goal with that hopefulness which God graciously gives to all reformers. These men are fighting against idolatry in various forms, and against what they now consider to be irregular worship of Yahweh in heathenish surroundings and dress. They are in their own way Puritans, and it is one of the clearest lessons of history that the world owes a great debt of gratitude to those who have fought similar battles at different epochs. This class of men, like all others, have the limitations and the defects of their qualities, but they are moved by a fiery earnestness which is inspired by the noble belief that there is a Great God and an everlasting truth, a real basis of national life and a hope of enduring righteousness.

IV. The Fundamental Idea and the Fundamental Law

Some great ideas have already been mentioned, but it is important that we should set in the central position the supreme truth, namely, that concerning the uniqueness of

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Yahweh the national God of Israel. In the earliest days there was *monolatry* in Israel, that is, the worship of one God without denying the existence of other gods, and comparatively free from theological speculation. This was in danger from superstitious customs handed down from ancient times, as well as from the popular tendency to seek divine help by paying homage to any god whose followers had achieved worldly success. Against this *syncretism* or mixing of religions a constant warfare had to be maintained by those prophets to whom the true God had given a fuller and clearer revelation of himself. When Amos, in the first chapter of his book, as the representative of Yahweh, lays down laws of justice and kindness that are regarded as binding upon men, independent of the territory that they occupy, or the clan name that they bear, *ethical* monotheism comes into the world of religious thought. If there are different gods there may be different moral codes, and the demands of the law of the god will apply only to his own people. The prophetic teaching passes beyond that tribal point of view, but Amos and Isaiah do not work out, as theologians, all that is implied in their message, and it is not necessary to suppose that they are conscious of its full import. God sees the beginning and end of a great movement, but even great men see only the part with which they are immediately concerned. We have come to the next stage in Deuteronomy; reflection has been at work, and men are endeavoring to state clearly the intellectual implications, as well as the practical consequences of this great faith. We cannot say that *absolute* monotheism has been attained, though an advanced stage in that direction has been reached. When we use the word LORD now, we think of One living God who rules, not only this round earth, but the whole ordered universe, by means of physical and moral laws that are the same in all times and places. That point of view is the highest achievement of the noblest thought of all the ages, and has under the guidance of God been wrought out

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with great difficulty, and by the coöperation of a great variety of spiritual forces. Judaism never came to that position in its pre-Christian days. There always clings to it a national atmosphere in the light of which these noble truths assume wider or narrower forms. Hence, we do well to retain the name of the original Jehovah, or Yahweh, as designating a personal, national God. This makes it difficult to define in precise terms the Deuteronomic position, the faith that Yahweh is supreme and incomparable, one in his own nature, the only God of Israel, and the Lord of the world. The other claimants for man's worship, like the sun and stars, are merely creatures, or they may be demons, or angels, having from God powers or place in the wide world, but no vital relationship to the religious life of Israel.

Israel as a nation was created and called by this one supreme God who has shown his power and his love in the long range of history. The promises given to the fathers have been abundantly fulfilled. A glorious land has been given to the nation in which to work out its destiny. Its blessings come not from the Canaanite Baals, but from the Lord of heaven and earth. And in order that this land may be made a place of prosperity and peace, there must be righteousness in every sphere of the nation's life; a church with pure worship, a community based upon the impartial administration of justice, a brotherhood of men united by bonds of sympathy to their God and to each other, and offering a fierce resistance to the entrance of unbelief and superstition from outside.

The Fundamental Law. It was not expected that the most powerful preaching could alone accomplish this result. If the nation is to become righteous so that its life shall be acceptable to God, and the punishment threatened by the prophets be warded off forever, then proper regulations must be made to guide this national life so as to produce pure worship and social goodness. The Fundamental Law is the law of centralization, the demand that only in

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one place shall sacrifice be made to Yahweh. To us, with our modern ideas, this seems contradictory, since from the fact of one God we draw the conclusion that the supreme Lord may be worshipped in any place where men have the true spirit of worship (Jn. 4 : 22). But we must remember that the consistency of abstract logic is one thing, the advancement through actual forms of history another thing. In order to destroy certain corrupt and degrading forms of worship it was necessary to disestablish the rural sanctuaries; and in the thought of that time the special sanctity of Jerusalem was connected with the fight against idolatry, and the struggle for the oneness and the supremacy of Yahweh. Thus we can understand that the noble creed of 6 : 4, setting forth the sublime nature of Israel's God and the spirituality of the worship that is due to him, becomes the heart of the Deuteronomic teaching,— the warning against the use of images, and the command to root out the sacred pillars and poles, being an application of it to the needs of the times. The demand for one, exclusive sanctuary is the centre of the legislation.

We are justified in calling the law of centralization the fundamental law because so many of the requirements in this code spring immediately from it, or are in some way related to it. Those parts of the legislation that cannot be so regarded are either republications of earlier laws or later additions. The following ordinances, then, should be noted as made necessary by this fundamental law.

1. *Sacrifice and Profane Slaughter.* The Hebrews were a people who lived a simple life so far as food was concerned. Flesh meat was not a regular article of diet, and only occasionally, at a family or tribal festival, or on the arrival of an honored guest, were animals slaughtered for food. In the early days every act of slaughter of this kind was also an act of sacrifice, and the blood was poured out at a sanctuary, or upon some sacred stone; the word used to denote this act had this double meaning of slaughter and sacrifice. In Chapter 12 it is clearly recognized that it is

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impossible to maintain this identity when all sacrifices must be offered in *one* place, hence a distinction is clearly drawn between sacred slaughter or sacrifice and secular killing. The latter may now take place at the distant home of the Israelite, who must be careful to observe the ancient prohibition against the eating of blood. Thus, a line is drawn in this particular between the sacred and the secular, between the common life of the home and the sacred offices of the church. This division was needful at the time, and tended to raise religion to a higher intellectual plane. In the later ritual these sacrifices were invested with a still deeper symbolic meaning, but we must always be on our guard against a mechanical division of our own life into sacred and secular.

2. *The Cities of Refuge.* In the olden time sanctuaries were places where men, who had put themselves in danger by shedding blood or by some other violation of the law, could flee for refuge, and find either temporary respite or permanent shelter (1 Kgs. 2:29). In extreme cases the sanctity of the altar was of no avail, but it is evident that the custom of seeking refuge at such places was ancient. Traces of it continued in some form down to late times in connection with the cathedrals and monasteries; and it is easy to understand such institutions as belonging to times when there was no elaborate legal code, and the exaction of punishment for wrongs inflicted was in the hands of the next of kin. The line between public justice and private revenge was not clearly drawn. The point now is that the abolition of the local sanctuaries called for the establishment of certain cities that would be invested with this particular privilege that those sanctuaries had formerly possessed; hence the command is given that such cities shall be appointed in various parts of the land according to the size of the territory (19:1–13).

3. *The Levites.* The generous and humane spirit of Deuteronomy is seen in its treatment of the Levites, the priests who had exercised their functions at the country

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sanctuaries. They are not attacked in any fierce, revengeful spirit, but it is expressly stipulated that if they come willingly to Jerusalem, they shall have the privilege of ministering, and shall find maintenance there. Those that are scattered through the land are, by frequent exhortations found in various parts of the book, commended to the sympathy and care of the people (18:6–8; 12:18, 19; 14:27, 29). The position taken is that the tribe of Levi is to have a monopoly of priestly rights and duties, and that from this tribe alone must men be chosen to offer sacrifice, and to perform the other ministerial duties at the one sanctuary. Provision for them, on a modest scale, must be made from the offerings presented at the altar, and from the gifts of the people. But we have not yet reached the final development, when a part of this tribe was selected for priestly service, and the rest reduced to a lower order of clergy, or temple servants. Here, as elsewhere, Deuteronomy stands in a halfway position. In the earliest times the head of the family, or the representative of the tribe, offered sacrifices (Judg. 6:26; 1 Sam. 14:34; 1 Kgs. 8), and in the late Jewish period all such acts were confined to the priesthood which was divided into high priest, priests, and Levites. How the tribe of Levi came to lose altogether its secular character and become completely devoted to priestly service is not quite clear. Probably the wars in which it lost large numbers of its men were undertaken from zeal for the name of Yahweh, and thus the survivors, in clinging to this service, were faithful to the most ancient traditions of their clan. In the present book all Levites are regarded as priests, and an attempt is made to guard them from suffering as a result of its fundamental law. In the later Priestly Code the tribe is differently treated; its organization and revenues are different, and Levite does not mean any member of the tribe as in Deut., but those who are *not* descendants of Aaron, that is, not priest in the strictest sense. The benevolent intentions of the Deutero-

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nomic Code, with regard to the Levites, evidently could not be carried out, but they show both the kindly spirit of its authors, and the thoroughness with which they sought to make practical provision for the carrying out of their law.

The Laws concerning Officers of Justice. In the early days, before the working out of special organizations for the various departments of social and civic life, the priests played a leading part in the dispensation of justice (Isa. 28:7). Where the thing could not be settled by mutual agreement, or friendly arbitration of neighbors, men had recourse to the oracle in charge of the priest at the local sanctuary. The disestablishment of the sanctuaries, then, must call for new regulations in regard to the administration of justice, since justice is quite as much a need of daily life as food. It is evident that the dispensing of justice could not be confined to Jerusalem, and that the priests could not altogether lose their position as judges. Hence, we read in 10:18, "Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which Yahweh thy God giveth thee, according to thy tribes, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment." Of course there were judges of this kind earlier in Israel. The elders of villages or towns held this position, but the relations of these new judges to the elders is not clear. The present law may be regarded as giving a general legal position to local magistrates of a non-priestly class who shall, in this respect, compensate for any loss suffered by the removal of the sanctuaries and deciding oracles. But a supreme place, as a court of final appeal, is reserved for "the priests the Levites," as any matter that is "too hard for thee in judgement, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates," shall be taken to Jerusalem for final settlement, and the man who does not accept this decision shall die. (Compare with this 1:9–18.) In this way the priest retains a dignified position as head of the judicial system, and provision is made for the local needs.

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Thus, many of the regulations in Deut. spring from its central law by which the reformation is to be made effective; others are a republication of older laws, and, even in the case of those for which we can find no written parallel, it is possible that many have existed in earlier codes. The law of the king (17 : 14) is meant to bring the highest civil authorities into sympathy with the aims and purposes of Deuteronomy; while the law of the prophet expresses the idea that certain great truths have been reached that no new revelation can annul. The miscellaneous laws which do not occur elsewhere are in some cases survivals from earlier times; *e.g.* we read in 19 : 14, "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark," etc. (cf. Hos. 5 : 10; Prov. 22 : 28), and we know that other ancient nations placed the boundary stones under the protection of the gods, and regarded them as sacred (cf. 21 : 22–23; 22 : 5, 9–11). These laws may express an advanced feeling of humanity, as in the treatment of female captives (21 : 10–14), or a later theological idea (24 : 16), the family of the criminal is not to suffer with him; or we may have in the form of legal precepts protests against specific heathen customs (14 : 21; 22 : 5). Thus, while there is much diversity in this collection of laws, yet, on careful examination, a very large number of its ordinances can be correlated to the central ideas of the book. If it lacks something of systematic smoothness, there is a living logic at the heart of it.

V. Its Religious Significance and Permanent Influence

A book of this kind, appearing at a critical period in the nation's life, was bound to exert a powerful influence. There were only the two alternatives, that it should be rejected and cast aside, or that it should make a deep and lasting mark on the life of Judah, and through it on the life of the world. The result is written clearly before us

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on the pages of the history. The catastrophe was not averted, the judgment came, swift and sure, so that the attempt to bring at once a kingdom of God on earth by the means of strict obedience to a definite number of laws was a disappointment, as such attempts must always be. But, notwithstanding this apparent failure, the document had a far-reaching influence of which its authors never dreamed. It is likely that if this small community could have been allowed quietly to work out its own destiny free from foreign interference, the struggle of the reformers might have been crowned with a certain measure of success, so far as the acceptance of a purer faith and a more thoroughly defined church constitution could secure it. An illustration of this fact may be seen in the building up of the later Jewish Church, under the influence of the Priestly Code, after the year 444 B.C., when the community being a small province of the great Persian empire, lost all power of negotiation with foreign countries, and was kept free from outside interference by the protection of the imperial edicts. The downfall of the nation, which took place a quarter of a century after the acceptance of Deuteronomy, in some respects hastened matters, and in others gave them a somewhat different turn. It has been said that Deuteronomy destroyed the nation but created the Church. Perhaps it would be safer to say that when the nation was broken, and its leaders carried into captivity, this book was one of the strongest forces that saved the religion by giving a living interpretation of history, and sketching in broad outline the constitution of a national Church. As is well known, the Jewish Church was built on the lines suggested by Ezekiel, and on the basis of the Priestly Code, but, in the two centuries that intervened between the Law-book of Josiah and that of Ezra, the Deuteronomic influence had been powerful, and even after the acceptance of Ezra's Law-book this influence was not altogether superseded.

In captivity the men of feeble faith were overwhelmed,

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but those who maintained an unfaltering conviction in Yahweh's supreme power began to realize even more fully the glorious significance of their past history, and carried on the warfare against idolatry with even fiercer zeal. The vigorous polemic of such passages as Jer. 10: 1–6; Isa. 44: 9 ff. probably belongs to this period. It can be easily understood that while the local superstitions might linger on in Palestine, those who had to fight for their faith in a foreign land would cut themselves clear from that questionable part of their past. Thus, image-worship disappears forever from the religion of the Jews.

When there was no temple in existence, and no altar could possibly be built in a profane land, the Babylonian exiles were thrown back upon the great thought of Deuteronomy, that religion is a matter for study, conversation, and teaching. They met together on the Sabbath day by the sides of rivers, or elsewhere, and attempted to sing the songs of Zion and offer prayer unto their God. The simple form of worship, consisting of prayer, praise, and the exposition of the Word, which persists in the Jewish synagogue, and in many forms of Christianity, began and gained strength in those dark hours. It meant much for those struggling saints; it was their only solace and inspiration; and as we can now see clearly, it meant much for the world, for there was formed, not only a plan to build a church which would be an external protection for the religion, but a purpose to gather together all that was noblest in their past literature, and so contribute to the Book that was to be "Yahweh for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

It has oftened been declared that Deuteronomy made religion to be more than in the past a thing of the book. That is a significant fact which needs considering. The greatest religions of the world have sacred books, and while there goes with the book the danger of slavish literalism, there goes with it, also, the possibility of intellectual quickening and spiritual inspiration. But it is

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well to note here, that when in order to root out idolatry, worship, in the sense of sacrificial offerings, was limited to one place, and when the Priestly Code carried this idea still further, and gave that side of religion completely into the hands of the priests, the idea of *teaching*, which Deuteronomy had made prominent, came into fuller play, and the synagogue with its schools began to give to Judaism the distinctive character that it has never lost. There we must look for both the weakness and the strength of Judaism, excessive worship of the past and barren, Rabbinic quibbling, but also clear faith in one God, and a tenacity of purpose, that have handed down the faith from generation to generation in spite of increasing persecution. If much that was picturesque and poetic in the ancient faith and custom was destroyed, that is only one form of the price that had to be paid for progress.

The character of the post-Exilic literature shows that there was great intellectual activity among men of Hebrew race and religion; and the real evidence for this is the so-called Wisdom Literature, with its universal outlook, and calm reflection upon all the facts of life. It is true that preachers of the type of Haggai and Zechariah have not either the natural gifts or the immediate inspiration of Amos and Isaiah, and we must admit that the strong emphasis laid by Deuteronomy on the written law and the objective standard tends at first to lessen individual originality. But nowhere can we find keener, more passionate, or more brilliant criticism of accepted dogma, than in those remarkable books, Job and Ecclesiastes. The doctrine that had been overemphasized by writers of the secondary Deuteronomic school was subjected to the most fiery test, and it was proved that the formula, *Do good and you will prosper, be wicked and you will suffer*, while it contains vital and abiding truth is not the whole of theology, or the sum and substance of religion.

If we are still compelled to class Deuteronomy as a book of national religion, and confess that it was held

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within those limitations that encompass even the noblest parts of the Old Testament, we gladly acknowledge that there is a prophetic element in it that looks forward with yearning desire for a richer liberty. There are in it real beginnings of the highest personal faith and the deepest spiritual religion. The noblest summary of human duty given by our Lord to an inquiring soul connects itself with this book, and shows us that it has not waited in vain for its fulfilment (6 : 5). (Compare with Matt. 22 : 37.) In the commentary we have frankly tried to point out that the conceptions of the world and religion that lie behind the most primitive things preserved in our book belong to a world quite different from our own. As we conclude, it is well to remember once more, that our larger, richer world of thought has been created for us by the men of the past, and that among those forces which helped to lift religion to a higher plane, and bring a larger, loftier thought of God, Deuteronomy must always be reckoned. A book, which in the order of God's gracious providence has been so creative in the past, has surely an important part still to play.

Analysis of Deuteronomy

A. Introductory Narratives and Discourses; 1 : 1–11 : 32.

I. The First Introduction; 1 : 1–4 : 43.
   (1) General superscription; 1 : 1–5.
   (2) Historical retrospect; 1 : 6–3 : 29.
   (3) A series of exhortations; 4 : 1–40.
   (4) Statement of appointment of Cities of Refuge; 4 : 41–43.

II. The Second Introduction; 4 : 44–11 : 32.
   (1) A new superscription; 4 : 44–49.
   (2) Discourse of Moses recalling the Covenant at Horeb and the Ten Commandments; 5 : 1–33.

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(3) The Great Exhortation; 5 : 1–11 : 32 (except 9 : 7b–10 : 9).
(*a*) Superscription; 6 : 1–3.
(*b*) Exhortation to worship Yahweh in love; 6 : 4–9.
(*c*) Not to forget Yahweh in the Promised Land; 6 : 10–19.
(*d*) To instruct future generations; 6 : 20–25.
(*e*) Warning against intercourse with the Canaanites; 7 : 1–26.
(*f*) Appeal to history; 8 : 1–6.
(*g*) Warning against forgetting God in prosperity; 8 : 7–20.
(*h*) Warning against self-conceit; 9 : 1–7a.
(*i*) Historical retrospect (related to 1 : 6–3 : 29), 9 : 7b–10 : 9.
(*j*) Various motives for loyalty and obedience; 10 : 10–11 : 32.

B. The Deuteronomic Legislation; Chaps. 12–26 (27) 28.

I. Legislation dealing mainly with worship; 12 : 1–18 : 22.
(1) Laws designed to protect the purity of religious worship; 12–13.
(2) Ordinances for the preservation of ceremonial purity; 14 : 1–21.
(3) The Law of Tithes; 14 : 22–29.
(4) Laws regarding the remission of debts and the release of slaves; 15 : 1–18.
(5) Law regarding the first-born of animals; 15 : 19–23.
(6) The three annual festivals; 16 : 1–17.
(7) Laws relating to the officers of the community, Judges, Kings, Priests, and Prophets; 16 : 18–18 : 22 (except 16 : 21–17 : 7).
(8) Further prohibition of heathen practices and idolatry; 16 : 21–17 : 7.

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II. A miscellaneous body of laws relating to the trial of criminals, war, the family, etc.; 19:1–24:4.
(1) Law regarding the Cities of Refuge; 19:1–13.
(2) Law of the boundary; 19:14.
(3) Law of witnesses; 19:15–21.
(4) Laws relating to the conduct of war; 20:1–20.
(5) Expiation for a murder by an unknown hand; 21:1–9.
(6) Marriage of a woman taken captive in war; 21:10–14.
(7) The right of the eldest born; 21:15–17.
(8) Punishment of a wicked son; 21:18–21.
(9) The case of a criminal who has been hanged; 21:22–23.
(10) Kindness to the neighbor; 22:1–4.
(11) Minor prescriptions: the concealment of sex; sparing of the mother-bird; precaution against accidents; mingling of species; wearing of tassels; 22:5–12.
(12) Charges of unchastity and cases of adultery; 22:13–30.
(13) Those who are excluded and those who may enter into religious communion; 23:1–8.
(14) Law regarding the ceremonial purity of the camp; 23:9–14.
(15) Kindness to the fugitive slave; 23:15–16.
(16) Immoral religious usages forbidden; 23:17–18.
(17) Regulation of usury; 23:19–20.
(18) Laws regarding vows; 23:21–23.
(19) Regulating the use of a neighbor's property; 23:24–25.
(20) Regulation of divorce; 24:1–4.

III. Varied laws mostly of a humane character; 24:5–25:4.
(1) Privilege of the newly married man; 24:5.
(2) The mill not to be taken in pledge; 24:6.
(3) Man-stealing forbidden; 24:7.

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(4) Treatment of leprosy; 24:8–9.
(5) Rules regarding pledges; 24:10–13.
(6) Kindness to hired servants; 24:14–15.
(7) Individual responsibility; 24:16.
(8) Consideration for the needy; 24:17–22.
(9) Regulation of corporal punishment; 25:1–3.
(10) The ox treading the corn not to be muzzled; 25:4.

IV. Regulations of a miscellaneous character; 25:5–26:15.
(1) The law of Levirate marriage; 25:5–10.
(2) Against unseemly action in women; 25:11–12.
(3) Just weights and measures; 25:13–16.
(4) The extermination of the Amalekites; 25:17–19.
(5) Liturgy to be used at the presentation of the first-fruits and tithes; 26:1–15.

V. Exhortations to obey the Law just given; 26:16–28:68.
(1) The formula of obligation to the Law; 26:16–19.
(2) Composite chapter of a special character; 27:1–26.
(*a*) An altar to be built and inscriptions to be set up; 27:1–10.
(*b*) The blessings and curses on Ebal and Gerizim; 27:11–26.
(3) The blessings and curses which follow obedience and disobedience; 28:1–68.
(*a*) The blessings; 28:1–14.
(*b*) The curses; 28:15–68.

C. Closing Speeches and Narratives; Chaps. 29–34.

I. A speech of exhortation and consolation; 29:1–30:20.
II. The narratives of the last words and deeds of Moses; 31–34.
(1) Appointment of Joshua as successor; 31:1–8, 14, 15, 23.

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(2) Regulation for the public reading of the Law; 31 : 9–13.
(3) Introduction to the song; 31 : 16–20.
(4) The song of Moses; 32 : 1–47.
(5) Commandment concerning the death of Moses: 32 : 48–52.
(6) The blessing of Moses; 33 : 1–29.
(7) The death of Moses; 34 : 1–12.

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THE aim has been to make the comments as brief as possible, consistent with clearness and suggestiveness, to explain in a few words the purport of each passage, and in some cases to add short remarks of a theological or practical nature. All references to dictionaries and commentaries in the notes have been avoided, as, if introduced at all, such references would, in dealing with a document of this kind, have needed to be very frequent, and they are not likely to be of service to those for whom the works in this series are primarily intended, while the advanced student knows where to find them. The present writer gladly acknowledges his obligations to Bertholet, Driver, Marti, Merx, Puukko, Steuernagel, and many others, who have dealt directly or indirectly with the problems of Deuteronomy, but in the following brief list he has mentioned only those books easily accessible to the English reader. In the first volume of this series, Genesis by Dr. H. G. Mitchell, a useful catalogue of books is given which can be recommended to the student of the Old Testament in general, and of the Pentateuch in particular. Those dictionaries and other volumes contain information on all points connected with the nature of Palestine and the history of its peoples. To save repetition the reader is referred to that list, and the following books are mentioned as bearing more particularly on the study of Deuteronomy.

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THE MORE IMPORTANT ABBREVIATIONS

AV	Authorized (King James) Version.
RV	English Revised Version.
Gr.	Septuagint.
Heb.	Hebrew.
m.	margin.
Sam.	Samaritan Pentateuch.
SV	Standard American Version.
Syr.	Syriac.
Tar.	Targum.
Vg.	Vulgate.
C. of H.	The Code of Hammurabi.

The letters in the margin, representing documentary analysis, are fully explained in the Introduction, but for convenience are set forth briefly here, as follows: —

J	The Yahwist Document.
E	The Elohist Document.
JE	These two in their combined form.
P	The Priestly Document in its full extent.
H	A special part of the Priestly Code, called "The Law of Holiness." Lev. Chaps. 17–26, etc.
D	The Original Deuteronomy. Chaps. 6–26, 28, except 9:7–10:9.
D^1	The Introductory section. 1–4:8; (9:7–10:9) and related parts.
D^2	Sections which are assigned to the Exilic period.
D^3	Large secondary sections of uncertain date.
D^4	Smaller secondary sections and notes of varied origin.

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THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

A. INTRODUCTORY NARRATIVES AND DISCOURSES; 1:1–11:32

I. THE FIRST INTRODUCTION; 1:1–4:43

1:1

1. These be the words which Moses spake unto all D²
Israel beyond Jordan in the wilderness, in the Arabah
over against Suph,[1] between Paran, and Tophel, and
2. Laban, and Hazeroth, and Di-zahab. It is eleven

[1] Gr. Vg. *Red Sea.*

First section, 1:1–4:43, containing a general superscription, 1:1–5; a historical retrospect in the form of a speech by Moses, 1:6–3:29; a series of exhortations, 4:1–40; statement that Moses appointed Cities of Refuge, 4:41–43.

1. 1–5. *A General Superscription concerning the Time and Place in which these Speeches and Laws were Given*

1, 2. The writer, speaking as one who lives on the west of the Jordan, tells us that Moses delivered the speeches "on the other side of the Jordan" (1, 5) to "all Israel" (a Deuteronomic phrase). The rest of the verses form a geographical puzzle which scholars have failed to explain or harmonize. The best solution seems to be that even this small section is composite. (On all such questions, see the Introduction.)

2. Gives the distance, about 160 miles, from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea, cf. v. 19.

3, 4. Give a twofold statement of the time, (1) in the fortieth year of the Exodus (P, the only document which reckons by months and days) (2) after the conquest of Sihon and Og (JE Num. 21:21 ff.), cf. also 2:26; 3:1; 4:46; 29:7; etc.

5. "Moses took it upon himself to *explain* and illustrate the following course of instruction."

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days' *journey* from Horeb by the way of mount Seir
P 3. unto Kadesh-barnea. And it came to pass in the
fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first
day of the month, that Moses spake unto the
children of Israel, according unto all that the LORD
D² had given him in commandment unto them; after
4. he had smitten Sihon the king of the Amorites,
which dwelt in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan,
5. which dwelt in Ashtaroth,[1] at Edrei: beyond Jordan,
in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law,
6. saying, The LORD[2] our God spake unto us in Horeb,
saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this moun-
7. tain: turn you, and take your journey, and go to the
hill country of the Amorites, and unto all *the places*
nigh thereunto, in the Arabah, in the hill country,
and in the lowland, and in the South, and by the sea
shore, the land of the Canaanites, and Lebanon, as far

[1] Gr. Vg. Syr. *and* at Edrei. [2] SV has *Jehovah* for LORD throughout the book.

2. *The Historical Review;* 1:6–3:29

6–8. Having accomplished the purpose of their stay at Horeb, the Israelites must now break up their camp and move forward in the direction of Palestine. **Horeb.** Deut. (except 33:2) like E uses this name for the mountain which the other documents name Sinai. All the land lying north of Kadesh-barnea, to Lebanon, the ideal northern limit. **Kadesh-barnea.** An important centre and sanctuary for the early Israelites, is fifty miles south of Beersheba (sometimes Kadesh alone, v. 46; 32:51). We have first the general designation, **the hill country of the Amorites** and then the special parts are given: the **Arabah**, the valley of the Jordan north of the Dead Sea; the hill-country in the centre of Palestine; the *Shephelah*, the land of low hills and flat valleys west and southwest of Judah; the *Negeb*, the dry region south of Palestine; the plain along the coast north of the Shephelah (cf. Gen. 15:18; Exod. 23:31; Deut. 11:24). **The land of the Canaanites.** Either a summary of the whole, or merely of the parts lying along the coast. Note (1) in Exod. 32:34 (E) the command to break up the camp has a differ-

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8. as the great river, the river Euphrates. Behold,[1] I
have set the land before you: go in and possess the
land which[2] the LORD sware[2] unto your fathers, to
Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give unto them and
9. to their seed after them. And I spake unto you at
that time, saying, I am not able to bear you myself
10. alone: the LORD your God hath multiplied you, and,
behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multi-
11. tude. The LORD, the God of your fathers, make you a
thousand times so[3] many more as ye are, and bless
12. you, as he hath promised you! How can I myself
alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your
13. strife? Take you wise men, and understanding, and

[1] Heb. Behold *thou*. Gr. Behold *ye* (pl.). [2] Gr. Sam. *I have sworn*. [3] SV *as*.

ent setting, it is given in anger on account of the sin of the people. (2) The phrases, "Yahweh our God," "Yahweh your God," etc., are specially frequent in Deut. and probably contain a covert polemic against Baal-worship and other forms of idolatry. (3) The promise sworn to the fathers is recorded in the earlier documents, the *oath* mentioned in JE (Gen. 22:16; 26:3) receives special emphasis in Deuteronomy.

9–18. Moses, at that time, called upon the people to select worthy men to assist him in the management of public affairs.

9. **At that time.** If this phrase is taken with exactness, then the contradiction between it and Exod. 18 is best solved by the suggestion that the latter chap. (JE) may have once stood beside Num. 10:29–36 (cf. the parallel statement, Num. 11:14 ff.).

10–12. The increase of the people, a sign of prosperity and blessing, has brought increase of cares for the ruler; Moses does not desire that the nation should be smaller, but he sees no escape except through division of labor. It is possible that the author omits any reference to Jethro's advice because of his jealousy for the originality and independence of Israel's life (4:7). **God of your fathers.** A great phrase linking the struggling present with the heroic past. But even with divine help one man cannot bear the **cumbrance** ("burden," Isa. 1:14), **burden**, and **strife** (contentious cases).

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known, according to your tribes, and I will make them
14. heads over you. And ye answered me, and said,
The thing which thou hast spoken is good *for us* to do.
15. So I took [1] the heads of your tribes,[1] wise men, and
known, and made them heads over you, captains of
thousands, and captains of hundreds, and captains of
fifties, and captains of tens, and officers [2] according to
your tribes.[2]
16. And I charged your judges at that time, saying,
[3] Hear *the causes* between your brethren, and judge
righteously between a man and his brother, and the
17. stranger [4] that is with him. Ye shall not respect per-
sons in judgement; ye shall hear the small and the
great alike; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man;

[1] Gr. om. and reads *from you.* [2] Gr. *to your judges.* [3] Heb. *Hear thou.* Gr. Sam. *Hear ye.* [4] SV has *sojourner* for stranger here and through the book except in 5:14.

13. The people must choose (cf. "Moses chose," Exod. 18:25). Translate, "Bring me, according to your tribes, men of wisdom and experience" (or of reputation). Here the *intellectual* qualities are emphasized; in Exod. 18:21, the moral.

15. Moses, with the consent of the people, improves the organization of the tribes by placing men of reputation in positions of different degrees of responsibility. **Heads.** Those who were to be heads, or read simply "from you." **Officers.** Subordinate officials, perhaps scribes, who keep a record of the work done by the **captains.**

16–19. The charge to the judges and people, and the breaking up of the camp. At that time also judges were appointed and their duties were defined, or to the "captains" (usually a military term) judicial functions were assigned, in the latter case we follow the reading of the Greek at the end of v. 15. This noble charge, in striking contrast to Eastern practice, shows the strong moral character of the Hebrew religion. The judge must be impartial, considering not the position of the person, but the justice of the cause; the great man must have his rights and the small man must be protected, the **stranger** *ger* (see 10:19; 14:21), also, must not be oppressed by his patron or be wronged by others

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for the judgement is God's: and the cause that is too
hard for you ye shall bring unto me, and I will hear
18. it. And I commanded you at that time all the things
which ye should do.
19. And we journeyed from Horeb, and went through
all that great and terrible wilderness which ye saw,
by the way to the hill country of the Amorites, as the
LORD our God commanded us; and we came to
20. Kadesh-barnea. And I said unto you, Ye are come
unto the hill country of the Amorites, which the LORD
our God giveth unto us.
21. Behold, the LORD thy God hath set the land before
thee: go up, take possession, as the LORD, the God
of thy fathers, hath spoken unto thee; fear not,
22. neither be dismayed. And ye came near unto me
every one of you, and said, Let us send men before us,
that they may search the land for us, and bring us
word again of the way by which we must go up, and

on account of his peculiar situation. The deep reason of this is that justice is God's work and the judge is merely his representative. Moses himself accepts the responsibility of his special relationship to their God by standing ready to judge the more difficult cases. To create an atmosphere in which justice may work he gives general instruction to the people and they are ready for the forward march.

19. On the terror of the wilderness cf. 8:15; Jer. 2:6. The desert et-Tih between the peninsula of Sinai and South Palestine. (On this verse cf. 1:1, 2 and see Introd., p. 12.)

20–28. The mission of the spies, the discouragement and rebellion of the people. They have come now to the land which Yahweh is *about to give* to them.

20. Their God has given it into their hands, *i.e.* it is his purpose that they should possess it, but they must do the work of the conquest in the strength of his promise. (20) On the change of person, see Introd., p. 13. Then the people ask that spies may be sent to search out the land; this proposal commends itself to Moses, and the representatives of the tribes are sent forth on their

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23. the cities unto which we shall come. And the thing
pleased me well: and I took twelve men of you, one
24. man for every tribe: and they turned and went up into
the mountain, and came unto the valley of Eshcol,
25. and spied it out. And they took of the fruit of the
land in their hands, and brought it down unto us, and
brought us word again, and said, It is a good land
26. which the LORD our God giveth unto us. Yet ye
would not go up, but rebelled against the command-
27. ment of the LORD your God: and ye murmured in
your tents, and said, Because the LORD hated us, he
hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to
deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.
28. Whither are we going up? our brethren have made
our heart to melt, saying, The people is greater and
taller [1] than we; [2] the cities are great and fenced [3] up

[1] Gr. Sam. *more numerous.* [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. *and the cities.* [3] SV *fortified.*

important errand. This statement, vs. 22–25 (cf. v. 8), should be compared with the account in Num. 13:1–16 (P). There (1) Moses sends them by the direct command of Yahweh. (2) Their names are given. (3) They go not merely to the valley of Eshcol near Hebron, but to the extreme north of the country. (4) They give a terrifying report of gigantic people and strong cities. Here it seems that the people show lack of faith by asking for the spies instead of going forth in reliance solely on the word of their God. The rebellion and murmuring of the people (vs. 26–28) imply the depressing report. Note here a kind of thing not uncommon in Deuteronomy, which throws light upon the nature of the history in the book. Moses is represented as making a speech and the sayings of the people are quoted. This is not direct history, it is evidently history used dramatically for homiletic purposes.

26–33. The people rebelled and showed complete lack of trust in God, in spite of the earnest exhortation of Moses.

26. Strong statement, they "defied the command (lit. *mouth*, cf. 34:5) of Yahweh their God," cf. v. 43.

27. They even go so far as to declare that through hatred

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to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the
29. Anakim there.
30. Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid
of them. The LORD your God who goeth before you,
he shall fight for you, according to all that he did for
you in Egypt [1] before your eyes; [1] and in the wilder-
31. ness, where thou hast seen how that the LORD thy D[R]
God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the Acts 13:18
32. way that ye went, until ye came unto this place.
33. Yet in this thing ye did not believe the LORD your D[2]
God, who went before you in the way, to seek you out
a place [2] to pitch your tents in, [2] in fire by night, to
shew you by what way ye should go, and in the cloud
34. by day. And the LORD heard the voice of your
35. words, and was wroth, and sware, saying, Surely there
shall not one of these men [3] of this evil generation [3]

[1] Gr. om. [2] Gr. *to guide you* in fire by night. [3] Gr. and Num. 14:22 om.

Yahweh is betraying them into the hands of powerful enemies and the advance can only mean certain destruction.

28. Cf. Josh. 11:21, 22. **Sons of the Anakim**, elsewhere referred to as "Anakim" or "Sons of Anak," were giants; Num. 13:33 applies to them the term Nephilim used in Gen. 6:4 (A.V. "giants"); according to Josh. 11:21 they were cut off by Joshua from Hebron, etc., and only in the cities of the Philistines were some of them left.

29, 30. The man of faith does not deny the difficulties, but contends that through these the power of God will be manifested in helping his people.

31. This has been shown in the past, in all the journey from Egypt to the present position. For the simile of fatherly care cf. 8:15. This beautiful phrase is perhaps a gloss here.

33. For this splendid symbol of God's guidance see Exod. 13:21.

34–40. Because of this rebellion the fierce anger of Yahweh brings punishment upon the people and upon Moses.

35. **This evil generation.** Probably an explanatory gloss to show that **these men** does not refer merely to the spies.

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see the good land, which I sware [1] to give [1] unto
36. your fathers, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, he
shall see it; and to him will I give the land that he
hath trodden upon, and to his children: because he
37. hath wholly followed the LORD. Also the LORD was
angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt
38. not go in thither: Joshua the son of Nun, which
standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage
thou him; for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.
D² 39. [2] Moreover your little ones, which ye said should
be a prey,[2] and your children, which this day have no
knowledge of good or evil, they shall go in thither, and
unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.
40. But as for you, turn you, and take your journey into
41. the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea. Then ye
answered and said unto me, we have sinned against

[1] Gr. Sam. om. [2] Gr. om.

36–39. These verses read like an editor's note on the basis of 3:28 and Num. 14:24, to point out that there were exceptions to this sweeping condemnation. **Caleb** and **Joshua** are brought in here rather awkwardly; and Moses, who throughout has sought to encourage the people, is called to suffer on account of their sin. According to Num. 20:10–12 (P) Moses is excluded from the land of promise because of his own transgression; and this happened at the same spot thirty-seven years later than the sending forth of the spies, as here recorded, an instance of double tradition (see Introd., p. 5). In this case the anger of their God is not visited upon the children; the present generation suffers for its own sin, and in the children mercy again finds expression and the promise is fulfilled, Isa. 7:15, 16; Ezek. 18.

41–46. Then came a strong revulsion of feeling, and the people rushed heedlessly into battle against the command of their leader and without the presence of their God. The consequence is that when the enemy swarms about them they are driven back and shed tears, not of true repentance, but of bitter disappointment and sharp despair; cf. Num. 14:40 f.

41. The obedience comes too late and not in the right spirit.

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the LORD,[1] we will go up and fight, according to all that the LORD our God commanded us. And ye girded on every man his weapons of war, and were forward[2]
42. to go up into the mountain. And the LORD said unto me, Say unto them, Go not up, neither fight; for I am not among you; lest ye be smitten before
43. your enemies. So I spake unto you, and ye hearkened not; but ye rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and were presumptuous, and went up into the
44. mountain. And the Amorites, which dwelt in that mountain, came out against you, and chased you, as bees do, and beat you down in[3] Seir, even unto Hor-
45. mah. And ye returned and went before the LORD; D^R but the LORD hearkened not to your voice, nor gave
46. ear unto you. So ye abode in Kadesh many days, according unto the days that ye abode *there*.
2. Then we turned, and took our journey into the D^1 wilderness by the way to the Red Sea, as the LORD spake unto me: and we compassed mount Seir many
2,3. days. And the LORD spake unto me, saying, Ye have

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. add *our God*. [2] m. deemed it a light thing. [3] Gr. Syr. Vg. *from Seir*.

44. **The Amorites**, referred to in Num. as "the Amalekite and the Canaanite," beat them down *from* **Seir** to **Hormah**. **Hormah**, formerly called Zephath; note the double tradition of the origin of the name (from *herem*, the ban).

45. It was impossible to bring back an opportunity that had been wilfully rejected.

46. **Many days** in the next verse means thirty-eight years (2:14); here it cannot have any such large meaning unless it belongs to a separate tradition which represents most of the time as being spent at Kadesh-barnea. One would expect the command given in v. 40 to be carried out without unnecessary delay; cf. Num. 14:25. Hence we must regard it as an editorial note.

2:1–8. The Israelites return to the wilderness and after wan-

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compassed this mountain long enough: turn you
4. northward. And command thou the people, saying, Ye are to pass through the border of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir; and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto your-
Acts 7:5 5. selves therefore: contend not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as for the sole of the foot to tread on: because I have given mount
6. Seir unto Esau for a possession. Ye shall purchase food of them for money, that ye may eat; and ye shall also buy water of them for money, that ye may
7. drink. For the LORD thy God hath blessed thee in all the work of thy hand:[1] he hath known[2] thy walking[2] through this great wilderness: these forty years the LORD thy God hath been with thee; thou
8. hast lacked nothing. So we passed by from[3] our brethren the chidren of Esau, which dwell in Seir, from[4] the way of the Arabah from Elath and from Ezion-geber.

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. *thy hands.* [2] Gr. *know* or *consider how thou wentest.* [3] Gr. Vg. om. *from*, i.e. *passed through (the territory of) our brethren.* [4] Gr. *through* or *by.*

dering many years on the west and south borders of Edom receive the command to march peaceably through that land.

3. **Long enough.** As in 1:6, sufficient for the purpose.

4. There is a blood relation between the two peoples, hence Israel must not take advantage of their fear to plunder the Edomites (23:7; Amos 1:11).

5. First reason for not meddling with the Edomites, Yahweh has allotted a country to them; cf. with Judg. 11:24, where Chemosh is said to have given a territory to Moab.

6. Cf. with Num. 20:14–21, a different incident belonging to an earlier stage of the wanderings.

7. Second reason for showing brotherly kindness, their God has showered blessings upon them even in the wilderness (8:2).

8. **Elath.** At the north end of the gulf of Akabah. **Ezion-geber.** Unknown, probably a little farther north. Vs. 4, 29

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And we turned and passed by the way of the wilder-
9. ness of Moab. And the LORD said unto me, Vex
not Moab, neither contend with them in battle: for
I will not give thee of his land for a possession; be-
cause I have given Ar unto the children of Lot for a
10. possession. (The Emim dwelt therein aforetime, a D^B
11. people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakim: these
also are accounted Rephaim, as the Anakim; but the
12. Moabites call them Emim. The Horites also dwelt
in Seir aforetime, but the children of Esau succeeded
them; and they destroyed them from before them, and
dwelt in their stead; as Israel did unto the land of
his possession, which the LORD gave unto them.)
13. Now[1] rise up,[2] and get you over the brook Zered. And D^B
we went over the brook Zered. And the days in
14. which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we were
come over the brook Zered, were thirty and eight years

[1] Sam. Gr. add *and now* or *now therefore*. [2] Sam. Gr. insert *and depart* (*break up camp*).

favor the Greek reading "*through* our brethren." **Wilderness** here may be a large tract of uncultivated land.

9. **Ar**, the chief city of Moab, and the territory belonging to it; the exact site of the city is not known.

10–12. Explanatory gloss of an antiquarian character, the latter part of which (v. 12) evidently belongs to v. 5; cf. 1:28. **Emim**, mentioned again only in Gen. 14:5, said here to be the Moabite name for a primitive people who were reckoned among the Rephaim or primeval giants.

12. **The Horites**, probably cave-dwellers. Caves (tombs) are still to be seen in the rocks at Petra which may originally have been used as dwellings. "**As Israel did**, etc.," these words clearly presuppose Israel's residence in Palestine.

13. Continuing the command of v. 9, they must cross the torrent or torrent-valley, **Zered** (running into the Dead Sea, but the precise situation unknown).

14, 15. Cf. Num. 32:13 (JE), all the generation was consumed.

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until all the generation of the men of war were consumed from the midst of the camp, as the LORD sware
15. unto them. Moreover the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from the midst of the camp, until they were consumed.
16. So it came to pass, when all the men of war were
17. consumed and dead from among the people, that
18. the LORD spake unto me, saying, Thou art this day
19. to pass over Ar, the border of Moab: and when thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon, vex them not, nor contend with them: for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon for a possession: because I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession.
DR 20. (That also is accounted a land of Rephaim: Rephaim dwelt therein aforetime; but the Ammonites
21. call them Zamzummim; a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakim; but the LORD destroyed

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Here we have the limiting phrase (**even**) **the men of war**; Num. 32:11 (P) has "from twenty years old and upward." They wasted away because they had set themselves in opposition to the Divine Will.

16–25. The Israelites are commanded not to molest the Ammonites, but to cross the Arnon and pass on into the territory of Sihon. This section has nothing corresponding to it in Num.

18. (*Even*) **Ar**, explanatory gloss from v. 9.

19. Running through these prohibitions there are two thoughts, the claims of kinship and the fact that Israel's God has given to each of these related tribes a specific inheritance. When they reach the Arnon and have the land of the Ammonites in front of them, they must leave it on the right and pass right through the territory of Sihon, king of Heshbon.

20–23. Another gloss of the same character as vs. 10–12.

20. "This also was a place where Rephaim dwelt in prehistoric times, but the name they bore was **Zamzummim**" (only here), cf. "Zuzim," Gen. 14:5. All these names have had some reference to ghosts as well as giants.

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them before them; and they succeeded them and
22. dwelt in their stead: as he did for the children of
Esau, which dwell in Seir, when he destroyed the
Horites from before them; and they succeeded them,
23. and dwelt in their stead even unto this day: and
the Avvim which dwelt in villages as far as Gaza,
the Caphtorim, which came forth out of Caphtor,
24. destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead.) Rise ye D²
up, take your journey, and pass over the valley of
Arnon: behold, I have given into thine hand Sihon
the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land: begin
25. to possess it, and contend with him in battle. This
day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear
of thee upon the peoples that are under the whole
heaven, who shall hear the report of thee, and shall
tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.
26. And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of
Kedemoth unto Sihon king of Heshbon with words of
27. peace, saying, Let me pass through thy land: I will

23. The annotator goes on to tell of the **Avvim**, the early inhabitants of southwest Palestine who were driven from their homes by Philistine immigrants from Caphtor (Crete, on the south coast of Asia Minor, Amos 9:7; Jer. 47:4).

24. **Arnon**, the north boundary of Moab.

25. They must prepare for battle with an alien people and their God will cause such a fear of them to spread abroad that the nations will tremble and writhe before them; a strong rhetorical expression meant to suggest the power of Yahweh rather than the powers of the people.

26–37. Sihon refuses to allow Israel to pass through his territory; he is defeated and his land seized by the Israelites.

26. **Kedemoth**, a city assigned to Reuben, Josh. 13:8 f., which must have been situated north of the Arnon. "**Heshbon** is frequently mentioned as the capital of Sihon (Num. 21:26, 34; Jud. 11:19, etc.); it was situated on a low hill rising out of the elevated tableland (3:10) about 16 miles east of the Jordan, where its ruins (of the Roman period) are still visible" (Driver).

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go[1] along by the high way,[1] I will neither turn unto
28. the right hand nor to the left. Thou shalt sell me
food for money, that I may eat; and give me water
for money, that I may drink: only let me pass
29. through on my feet; as the children of Esau which
dwell in Seir, and the Moabites which dwell in Ar, did
unto me; until I shall pass over Jordan into the land
30. which the LORD our God giveth us. But Sihon king
of Heshbon would not let us pass by him: for the
LORD thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart
obstinate,[2] that he might deliver him into thy hand,
31. as at this day. And the LORD said unto me, Behold,
I have begun to deliver up Sihon[3] and his land before
thee: [4]begin to possess, that thou mayest inherit[4]
32. his land. Then Sihon came out against us, he and all
33. his people, unto battle at Jahaz. And the LORD our
God delivered him up before us; and we smote him,
34. and his sons,[5] and all his people. And we took all
his cities at that time, and utterly destroyed every
inhabited city, with the women and the little ones;

[1] m. Heb. *by the way, by the way.* [2] m. Heb. *strong.* [3] Sam. Gr. add *king of Heshbon, the Amorite.* [4] Gr. *begin to take possession of.* [5] m. *son,* but Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. read *sons.*

27. "By the way I will go," emphatic, meaning I will keep to the way. Cf. Num. 21:22, "in the king's way will we go."

28. The inhabitants of a land are near the cisterns and other sources of supply; they are justified in exacting reasonable toll from passing caravans.

30. Genuine peaceful overtures are made, but Yahweh hardens the heart of the king for the twofold purpose of punishing his wickedness and doing good to Israel; cf. the similar case of Pharaoh, Exod. 9:34.

32. **Jahaz**, south of Heshbon, but the exact position cannot be determined, Josh. 13:18; Isa. 15:4.

34. Num. 21:24 does not bring out this feature of the situation. "We devoted (executed the ban upon) every city, the men, the

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35. we left none remaining: only the cattle we took for
a prey unto ourselves, with the spoil of the cities
36. which we had taken. From Aroer, which is on the
edge of the valley of Arnon, and *from* the city that
is in the valley, even unto Gilead, there was not a city
too high for us: the LORD our God delivered up all
37. [1]before us[1]: only to the land of the children of Am-
mon thou camest not near; all the side of the river
Jabbok, and the cities of the hill country, [2]and where-
soever[2] the LORD our God [3]forbad us.[3]

3. Then we turned, and went up the way to Bashan:
and Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he
2. and all his people, unto battle at Edrei. And the
LORD said unto me, Fear him not: for I have de-
livered him, and all his people, and his land, into thy
hand; and thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto
Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.

[1] Sam. Gr. *into our hand.* [2] Gr. *according to all.* [3] Sam. Gr. *commanded us.*

women, and children. We did not allow any one to escape." Cf. 7: 2, 3; 20: 17.

36. The geographical statements are vague, but the meaning evidently is that they swept the whole extent of Sihon's territory.

37. The limits of their conquest were marked out by Divine command; cf. v. 19 and Josh. 22: 25. They kept clear of the whole side of the torrent of the Jabbok and the cities of the hill country. The **Jabbok**, a notable east Jordan stream; its valley has remarkable features and served well the purposes of a boundary; see the famous incident, Gen. 32: 24.

1–7. The Conquest of Og, king of Bashan; cf. Num. 21: 33–35.

1. **Bashan**, an east-Jordan land north of the Jarmuk, stretching to Hermon in the north and to the Hauran in the east. With the article it probably means the fruitful plain. It is mostly associated with the name of Og. **Edrei** (1: 4), a royal city on its southern border.

2. **I have delivered.** The perfect of confidence or certainty common in speeches attributed to Yahweh.

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3. So the LORD our God delivered into our hand Og also,
the king of Bashan, and all his people: and we smote
4. him until none was left to him remaining. And we
took all his cities at that time; there was not a city
which we took not from them; threescore cities, all
the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan.
5. All these were cities fenced with high walls, gates,
and bars; beside the unwalled towns[1] a great many.
6. And we utterly destroyed them, as we did unto Sihon
king of Heshbon, utterly destroying every inhabited
7. city, with[2] the women and the little ones. But all
the cattle, and the spoil of the cities, we took for a
8. prey unto ourselves. And we took the land at that
time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amor-
ites that were beyond Jordan, from the valley of
9. Arnon[3] unto mount Hermon; (*which* Hermon the
Sidonians call Sirion, and the Amorites call it Senir;)

[1] m. *country towns.* [2] Gr. Syr. Vg. Tar. *and* (the women). [3] 7 Mss. Sam. Gr. Syr. add *and.*

4. The precise situation of **the region of Argob** is not known; it is supposed by many to be the same as Trachonitis (now el-Leja), a district about thirty miles south of Damascus, and forty miles east of the Sea of Galilee.

5. These were fortified cities and open (uninhabited) places; they cannot now be identified; many of the ruins at present found in this region are those of buildings belonging to a much later time. But a correct impression is given; the Israelites were a simple vigorous people going against nations that were more civilized, but also more corrupt.

8–11. A summary of the information already given in 2:32–3:7.

8. **Beyond Jordan** is probably an explanatory addition, as Moses is speaking at the same side of the Jordan as these kingdoms are situated.

9. Another antiquarian note. **Sidonians,** in the O. T. the name of the Philistines in general. For these names of the mountain, see

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10. all the cities of the plain, and all Gilead, and all
Bashan, unto Salecah and Edrei, cities of the king-
11. dom of Og in Bashan. (For only Og king of Bashan D[R]
remained of the remnant of the Rephaim; behold,
his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in
Rabbah of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was
the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it,
12. after the cubit of a man.) And this land we took in D[1]
possession at that time: from Aroer, which is by[1] the
valley of Arnon, and half the hill country of Gilead,
and the cities thereof, gave I unto the Reubenites
13. and to the Gadites: and the rest of Gilead, and all
Bashan, the kingdom of Og, gave I unto the half D[R]
tribe of Manasseh; all the region of Argob, even all

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. Tar. Vg. add *the shore* (*border*) *of*.

Ps. 29:6, Ezek. 27:5, etc., and for another name see 4:48,—probably they denote different parts of Hermon.

10. The direct object of "we took" in v. 8. **Salecah** (Salchah) in the extreme southeast corner of Bashan.

11. The commentator who has already shown his interest in the Rephaim here supplies us with further information. When Og was conquered Israel could sweep over the country because he was the last of the giant race and there was no one left capable of offering such stubborn resistance. In proof of his great stature we are told of his bed or tomb of iron (black basalt) which is in Rabbah-Ammon (northeast of Bashan on the upper Jabbok), it was twelve and a half feet long and about six feet in breadth. This speech is set in the same year as that in which Og was defeated; the question, **Is it not in Rabbah?** etc., must, of course, belong to a later time.

12–17. The land is allotted to Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

12. From Aroer on the edge of the torrent-valley of the Arnon (11:36); *i.e.* the land stretching north from this point, and the south half of Gilead is given to Reuben and Gad, the remainder of Gilead and the whole of Bashan being allotted to the half tribe of Manasseh.

13. **All the region of Argob** explains the phrase **all Bashan.**

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Bashan. (The same is called the land of Rephaim.[1]
14. Jair the son of Manasseh took all the region of Argob, unto the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites; and called them, even Bashan, after his own name, Havvoth-jair, unto this day.)
15, 16. And I gave Gilead unto Machir. And unto the Reubenites and unto the Gadites I gave from Gilead even unto the valley of Arnon, the middle of the valley,[2] and the border *thereof*[2] even unto the river Jabbok, which is the border of the children of Am-
17. mon; the Arabah also, and Jordan and[3] the border *thereof*,[2] from Chinnereth even unto the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, under the slopes[4] of Pisgah eastward.
D[2] 18. And I commanded you at that time, saying, The

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. insert *and* (Jair, etc.). [2] m. *for a border*. [3] Gr. om. *and*. [4] m. *springs*.

Then from "All Bashan is called the land of Rephaim" to the end of v. 17 we have a supplementary and probably secondary statement concerning the same territory.

14. The writer for some reason has set the tent-villages of Jair in Bashan instead of Gilead; cf. Num. 32:39–41; 1 Chron. 2:22 f. Judg. 10:3–5 places Jair in a later age, while Josh. 13:30 is related to our present text. **Unto this day** implies a considerable stretch of time. Geshur and Ma'acah, two Aramæan tribes of the west of Bashan; down to the time of David they were ruled by independent kings, 2 Sam. 3:3, etc.

15. Probably taken from Num. 32:40.

16–17. Substantially a repetition of v. 12 with further particulars as to the boundaries. To those two tribes were given a region extending from Gilead on the north, to the Arnon on the south, to the Jabbok on the east, and comprising the east valley of the Jordan, from Gennesareth down to the Dead Sea, to the slopes of Pisgah. **The Arabah**, "the deep depression through which the Jordan flows, in which the Dead Sea is situated, and which is prolonged south of this to the Gulf of Akabah" (Driver). The name may be applied to either the higher or lower parts of this valley.

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LORD your God hath given you this land to possess it: ye shall pass over armed before your brethren the
19. children of Israel, all the men of valour. But your wives, and your little ones, and your cattle, (I know that ye have much cattle,) shall abide in your cities
20. which I have given you; until the LORD give rest unto your brethren, as unto you, and they also possess the land which the LORD your God giveth them beyond Jordan: then shall ye return every man unto
21. his possession, which I have given you. And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, Thine eyes have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto these two kings: so shall the LORD do unto all the
22. kingdoms whither thou goest over. Ye[1] shall not fear them: for the LORD your God, he it is that fighteth for you.
23, 24. And I besought the LORD at that time, saying, O Lord GOD, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy

D[R]

D[2]

[1] Sam. Gr. Vg. *thou*.

18–20. The tribes on the east of Jordan are exhorted to help their brethren to gain a firm position on the other side, Num. 32: 16 f., Josh. 1: 12–16.

19. The east-Jordan tribes to whom the command was given were a pastoral more than an agricultural people.

20. **Beyond Jordan**, cf. v. 8.

21–22. Joshua commanded to take encouragement from the past dealings of their God. This statement anticipates v. 28, and Moses has not yet been assured that he must give up the leadership.

22. Repeats 1: 30.

23–29. The prayer of Moses to be allowed to enter into the land west of the Jordan is rejected; he may view the land from Pisgah, and he must appoint Joshua as his successor; cf. the different narrative of the same events, Num. 27: 12–21 (P).

23. **At that time**, soon after the victory over Sihon and Og.

24. **Lord Yahweh**, a title used more in the prophetic than the

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greatness, and thy strong hand: for what god is
there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to
25. thy works, and according to thy mighty acts? Let
me go over, I pray thee, and see the good land that
is beyond[1] Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Leb-
26. anon. But the LORD was wroth with me for your
sakes, and hearkened not unto me: and the LORD
said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto
27. me of this matter. Get thee up into the top of Pis-
gah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward,
and southward, and eastward, and behold with thine
28. eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan. But
charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen
him: for he shall go over before this people, and he
shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt
29. see. So we abode in the valley over against Beth-
peor.

[1] SV has, here and in similar cases, *the* Jordan.

historical books. The greatness of Israel's God has been revealed in the mighty acts so far related, but there is a richer revelation to come, and Moses longs to share in this. In his words the patriotic feeling of the Hebrew people finds expression, the noble hill-country that they love he was not allowed to see.

26. Yahweh was enraged with him (a very strong word) on account of the people, 1:37 and 4:21, and commanded him to let the matter drop.

27. From the top of Pisgah he may view the land in all directions, cf. 34:1. **Eastward** must not be taken too literally.

28. Cf. the account in Num. 27 (P) which appears to be set at a time before the events narrated in this chapter. All further reference in Deuteronomy to the carrying out of this command is contained in the statement that Moses encouraged Joshua (31:7), and that the Lord gave him a charge (31:14–23).

29. In this indirect fashion the author states where the Law was given. In one of the glens or ravines of the Abarim range to which Pisgah belongs, opposite the sanctuary of the Moabitish god Ba'al-Pe'or.

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4. And now, O Israel, hearken unto the statutes and
unto the judgements,[1] which I teach you, for to do
them; that ye may live, and go in and possess the
land which the LORD, the God of your fathers, giveth
2. you. Ye shall not add unto the word which I com- Rev. 22:18
mand you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye f.
may keep the commandments of the LORD your God
which I command you.[2]
3. Your eyes have seen what the LORD did because of
Baal-peor: for all the men that followed Baal-peor,
the LORD thy[3] God hath destroyed them from the

[1] In all such as 4:1, 45; 6:1, etc., SV substitutes *ordinances* for *judgements*. [2] Gr. adds *to-day*. [3] Gr. *your* (pl.).

3. *A Series of Exhortations and Warnings;* 4:1–40

This chapter is evidently composite; the greater part of it consists of earnest exhortations based upon the facts of Israel's own history and may be divided into the four following sections:—

1–8. Warning based on recent experience.

9–24. Lesson drawn from the revelation at Horeb against worship of images.

25–31. God will punish idolatry with exile, but will, even in that dire extremity, have mercy on the truly penitent.

32–40. Yahweh must be recognized as the only God who has given a wonderful revelation of himself in history.

1–8. From the recent terrible experience at Ba'al-Pe'or they must learn the need of strict obedience.

1. **And now**, transition to something of great importance, cf. 10:12. **Statutes and judgements**, given in 12 ff. This phrase is common in writers of the Deuteronomic school; the former word refers to ordinances engraven in permanent form, the latter to judicial decisions which constitute authoritative precedents, but they tend to be used in a general sense. Deuteronomy lays great stress on true teaching and loyal discipleship.

2. Cf. 12:32. Perhaps not yet in the absolute literal sense of Rev. 22:18, but here is a beginning of canonical law.

3, 4. The great lesson so prominent in many parts of this book that those who obey the law shall escape disastrous judgments and enjoy abiding prosperity is proved from Israel's recent

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4. midst of thee.[1] But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God are alive every one of you this day.
5. Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgements, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the midst of the land whither ye go
6. in to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and under-
7. standing people. For what great nation is there, that hath a god so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God
8. is whensoever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that hath statutes and judgements so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?

[1] Gr. *us*.

experience (Num. 25: 1–5 (JE)). **Ba'al-Pe'or.** The name both of the god (Ba'al *of* Pe'or) and of the place where he was worshipped. The Ba'al was the god or lord of a particular locality or possessing a special attribute.

5. **I have taught you.** It is supposed by some that this refers to earlier teaching at Horeb, by others that the passage originally belonged to the close of the book; probably the best explanation is that it is a lively form of the present after the imperative **Behold**; thus it would connect with the previous chapters.

6. Israel's **wisdom** is in loyalty to the Law which apparently restricts its freedom but in reality guides and elevates its life; the national prosperity and greatness resulting from this obedience shall lead other nations to recognize its real cause.

7. The gods of other nations do not enter so deeply into their life as Yahweh has entered into the life of Israel.

8. And no great nation has a law which reveals so fully the righteousness of God and corresponds so completely to man's moral needs. This verse shows a proud consciousness of Israel's religious superiority which history has fully justified, but taken in a one-sided fashion it may breed a narrow sectarianism.

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9. Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul dili- D
gently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes
saw, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days
of thy life; but make them known unto thy children
10. and thy children's children; the day that thou
stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when
the LORD said unto me, Assemble me the people, and
I will make them hear my words, that they may learn
to fear me all the days that they live upon the earth,
11. and that they may teach their children. And ye
came near and stood under the mountain; and the
mountain burned with fire unto the heart of heaven, Heb. 12:
12. with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness. And the 18 f.
LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye
heard the voice of words, but ye saw no form; only
13. *ye heard* a voice. And he declared unto you his
covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even

9–24. Yahweh, who appeared without visible form at Horeb, must not be worshipped with images.

9. **Take heed**, etc. A favorite Deuteronomic form of exhortation, cf. v. 23; 6:12, 8:11, etc. The **heart** is the seat of the mind; here the call is to thoughtful remembrance of the past, cf. 8:2. On teaching to children, cf. 6:7.

10. The day in which they stood before Yahweh at Horeb is specified as one of the things they must not forget. The purpose of the revelation was that they might learn to fear God and teach their children to fear him, this fear to be shown by keeping the Law.

11. **The heart**, centre or innermost part, Exod. 15:8.

12. The voice of Yahweh could be heard from the fire, but he was in no way visible, not even in dim outline (Job 4:16); there was no shape or figure, Exod. 20:4; cf., however, Num. 12:8; Ps. 17:15.

13–14. A digression, if not an addition, see 5:22–31. Moses is here concerned with the manner rather than the substance of the revelation. **Covenant.** Used in 7:2 in the sense of a league among men, when certain obligations are laid on the inferior party.

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the ten commandments;[1] and he wrote them upon
14. two tables of stone. And the LORD commanded me
at that time to teach you statutes and judgements,
that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over
to possess it.
15. Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for
ye saw no manner of form on the day that the LORD
spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire:
16. lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven
image in the form of any figure, the likeness of male
17. or female, the likeness of any beast that is on the
earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in
18. the heaven, the likeness [2]of any thing that creepeth
on the ground,[2] the likeness of any fish that is in the
19. water under the earth: and lest thou lift up thine
eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun and

[1] m. Heb. *words.* [2] Gr. *of any creeping thing that creepeth*, etc.

Elsewhere God is one of the contracting parties; he or Moses in his name makes (*cuts*) the covenant with Israel. Note the covenant made with the fathers, 4:31, at Horeb, 5:2; 29:25; in Moab, 29:1. The covenant is made in solemn ceremony with sacrificial observances, Gen. 15:8–10 (JE). Here the word is applied to the conditions of the Covenant, the Law. These terms and conditions Moses must make clear in his instructions to the people.

15–20. A warning, based on v. 12, against making images of God.

16. **A graven image** in the form of any statue, then more specifically a copy or model of a man or woman.

17–18. Then the prohibition is extended to take in its compass the making of copies or models of all kinds of animals. The "graven image" was originally of carved wood or hewn stone, but later included molten images (Isa. 40:19). **Statue**, a rare word, only again Ezek. 8:3, 5; 2 Chron. 33:7, 15. Such worship was not uncommon in the Semitic world, and even threatened the religion of Israel, Ezek. 8:10.

19–21 (1). The heavenly bodies have great splendor and

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the moon and the stars, even all the host of heaven, thou be drawn away and worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all
20. the peoples under the whole heaven. But the LORD hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as at this day.
21. Furthermore the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, and sware that I should not go over Jordan, and that I should not go in unto that good land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inherit-
22. ance: but I must die in this land, I must not go over Jordan: but ye shall go over, and possess that good
23. land. Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image in the form of any thing which the LORD thy God hath forbidden
24. thee. For the LORD thy God is a devouring fire, a jealous God. Heb. 12:29

attraction, but even these must not be worshipped in Israel. This danger seemed to have come in with greater force after the eighth century when the Assyrian and Babylonian influence was strong, 2 Kings 17:10; Zeph. 1:5; Jer. 7:18; 8:2; Ezek. 8:16.

(2) Note the striking statement that Yahweh has allotted the heavenly bodies, as objects of worship, to other nations, cf. 32:8.

(3) But Israel he has redeemed to be his peculiar possession 7:6; 14:2. Without his help Egypt would have been to them a destructive fire, like a furnace for smelting iron, Jer. 11:4. Because of their great history they should be ashamed of yielding to heathen rites and customs.

21. Again the sad thought that Moses himself is to have no part in this glorious inheritance, 1:37; 3:26. The oath is not elsewhere mentioned in this connection.

23. Because they are now about to lose their leader they must beware not to forget this great exhortation against image worship.

24. And this all the more because Yahweh is a devouring fire

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DE 25. When thou[1] shalt beget children, and children's
children, and ye shall have been long in the land, and
shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image in
the form of any thing, and shall do that which is evil
in the sight of the LORD thy[2] God, to provoke him
26. to anger: I call heaven and earth to witness against
you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from
off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess
it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall
27. utterly be destroyed. And the LORD shall scatter you
among the peoples, and ye shall be left few in num-
ber among the nations, whither the LORD shall lead
28. you away. And there ye shall serve gods, the work
of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see,
29. nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. But if from thence ye[3]
shall seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou
search after him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

[1] Sam. *ye.* [2] Sam. Gr. *your.* [3] Sam. Vg. Tar. *thou shalt seek.*

(9:3, against their enemies), in this sense that he is jealous for his own honor and will not allow them to give to graven images the worship due to him.

25–31. Such apostasy will cause the nation to be sent into exile.

25. When they have lost their youthful force and original religious zeal, they may vex their God by their idolatries.

26. Then heaven and earth that abide through all human generations will witness to God's faithfulness and their folly, cf. 30:19; 32:1; Mic. 6:2.

27. The promise of increase and prosperity cannot be fulfilled; they shall become a miserable few in an alien world.

28. The punishment shall partake of the nature of the sin; in a foreign land they must worship false gods, and surely these are miserable creatures, Isa. 40:20; 44:19.

29–31. The ever faithful God will show mercy to those who are penitent.

29. In the hour of sorrow God may be sought and found if the

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30. When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are
come upon thee, [1]in the latter days thou shalt return[1]
31. to the LORD thy God, and hearken unto his voice: for
the LORD thy God is a merciful God; he will not fail
thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of
32. thy fathers which he sware unto them. For ask now D
of the days that are past, which were before thee, since
the day that God created man upon the earth, and
from the one end of heaven unto the other, whether
there hath been *any such thing* as this great thing is, or
33. hath been heard like it? Did ever people hear the
voice of God [2] speaking out of the midst of the fire,
34. as thou hast heard, and live? Or hath God assayed to
go and take him a nation from the midst of *another*
nation, by temptations,[3] by signs, and by wonders, and
by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out
arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the

[1] m. *if in the later days thou return.* [2] Sam. Gr. *voice of a living God.* [3] m. *trials* or *evidences.*

repentance is real, involving a real change of the most thorough kind, 6:5.

30. In the exile the faith of many was destroyed, but the real leaders proved the chastening influence of sorrow and learned to sing "Yahweh's song in a foreign land" (Ps. 137), and were able to look for **the latter days**, the new era of blessing.

32–40. Yahweh has done great wonders in the past, showing his unique greatness and his graciousness towards this people.

32. The revelation at Horeb is the greatest wonder ever known through the whole length of history and the whole extent of the world.

33. Did any other god ever give such clear evidence of divine power, revealing himself in such an overpowering fashion, electing a people out of all the tribes, and redeeming that people out of the hand of its oppressors?

34. And all this with strange manifestations of power, signs, portents, and deeds that struck terror into the heart of their foes. The whole story of the Exodus is the illustration of these verses.

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LORD your [1] God did [2] for you [2] in Egypt before your
Mk. 12:32 35. eyes? Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest
know that the LORD he is God; there is none else be-
36. side him. Out of heaven he made thee to hear his
voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he
made thee to see his great fire; and thou heardest his
37. words out of the midst of the fire. And because
he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed
after them, and brought thee out with his presence,
38. with his great power, out of Egypt; to drive out
nations from before thee greater and mightier than
thou, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an in-
39. heritance, as at this day. Know therefore this day,
and lay it to thine heart, that the LORD he is God in
heaven above and upon the earth beneath: there is
40. none else. And thou shalt keep his statutes, and
his commandments, which I command thee this day,
that it may go well with thee, and with thy children
after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days
upon the land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee,
for ever.

DR 41. Then Moses separated [3] three cities beyond Jordan

[1] Gr. *our God*. [2] Gr. om. [3] SV set apart.

35–40. The purpose of all this is that Israel may recognize Yahweh's unique divinity and glory.

39. **He is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath: there is none else**, and therefore this people must accept this teaching and obey the Law as the condition of continued prosperity.

4. *Moses appoints Three Cities of Refuge in the Territory East of the Jordan; vs.* 41–43

41. **Separated.** Appointed for this particular purpose. **Beyond Jordan** (AV *on this side Jordan*), from west-Jordan standpoint; cf. 1:1; 3:8, etc.

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42. toward the sunrising; that the manslayer might flee thither, which slayeth his neighbour unawares, and hated him not in time past; and that fleeing unto
43. one of these cities he might live: *namely*, Bezer in the wilderness, in the plain country,[1] for the Reubenites; and Ramoth in Gilead, for the Gadites; and Golan in Bashan, for the Manassites.

II. The Second Introduction; 4:44–11:32

44. And this is the law which Moses set before the chil- D
45. dren of Israel: these are the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgements, which Moses spake unto

[1] m., *table land.*

42. They are designed for the protection of the unintentional manslayer that the law of blood revenge may not be applied too hastily. See on Chap. 19.

43. The precise site of these east-Jordan cities is unknown, though the general situation is clear; cf. Josh. 20:8.

This section makes a break in the narrative and is probably from the hand of the editor who joined the Priestly Document to the older historical and legal material, who inserted here, after the narrative of the conquest of this territory (see Chap. 3), the names of the trans-Jordanic Cities of Refuge said to have been appointed by Moses. Note, then, (1) Chap. 19 demands the appointment of three cities with provision for three more if the territory is increased.

(2) P's law in Num. 35:10 f. says that when they have reached Palestine they shall appoint six cities, three for each side of the Jordan.

(3) According to Josh. 20:8 these cities were appointed by Joshua.

1. *A New Superscription;* 4:44–49

44. Probably a link between the First Introduction (1:1–4:43) and the body of laws contained in Chaps. 12–26, 28.

45. Superscription to the Second Introduction (4:45–11:32) and the Deuteronomic Laws (12–26, 28). A "testimony," a solemn authoritative declaration; in P, used specially of the Ten Commandments, Exod. 25:16.

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the children of Israel, when they came forth out of
D^R 46. Egypt; beyond Jordan, in the valley over against
Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites,
who dwelt at Heshbon, whom Moses and the children
of Israel smote, when they came forth out of Egypt:
47. and they took his land in possession, and the land of
Og king of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites,
which were beyond Jordan toward the sunrising;
48. from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of Arnon,
49. even unto mount Sion [1] (the same is Hermon), and all
the Arabah beyond Jordan eastward, even unto the
sea of the Arabah, under the slopes [2] of Pisgah.
D^S 5. And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto
them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the judgements
which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn
2. them, and observe to do them. The LORD our God
3. made a covenant with us in Horeb. The LORD made
not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even

[1] Syr. *Sirion.* [2] m. *springs.*

46–49. A supplementary passage consisting of statements found in 1–3. **Sion**, a name for Hermon which does not occur elsewhere; cf. 3:9.

2. *Discourse of Moses recalling the Covenant at Horeb and the Ten Commandments; Chap.* 5

Because of the covenant made at Horeb on the basis of the Ten Commandments, and because at that time the people desired him to be a mediator, Moses calls upon them to show sincere loyalty and strict obedience to Yahweh.

1–5. Moses reminds the people of the revelation given at Horeb. **Hear, O Israel.** This great discourse is marked by a tone of earnest pleading, 6:4; 9:1.

2. On **covenant**, see 4:13. The obligation includes not merely the "Ten Words," but the whole Law.

3. The covenant was made with the present, not with a previous, generation. (**Our fathers** may in some cases refer to dis-

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4. us, who are all of us here alive this day. The LORD
spake with you face to face in the mount out of the
5. midst of the fire,[1] (I stood between the LORD and you D[R]
at that time, to shew you the word[2] of the LORD: for
ye were afraid because of the fire, and went not up
into the mount;) saying,
6. I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of D[S]
the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.[3]
7. Thou shalt have none other gods before me.[4]
8. Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image,[5]
the likeness of any form that is in heaven above, or that
is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the
9. earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor

[1] Gr. adds *and* or *but I*. [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. Tar. *words*. [3] m. Heb. *bondmen*. [4] m. *beside me*. [5] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. insert *and* (i.e., *nor*) (so Exod. 20:4). SV *nor* any likeness *of anything*.

tant ancestors, but here the contrast suggests something more specific.) The author of this passage does not seem to have the same realization of the lapse of forty years as is found in 1:35, 39; 2:16.

4. **Face to face.** A strong expression of the fact that here Yahweh addressed the "Ten Words" directly to the people.

5. Read with the versions "While I, etc.," and "words of Yahweh." This verse stands in such strong contrast to 4 that it must be regarded as an addition based on 27, or with RV treated as a parenthesis anticipating 22 ff.; in the latter case the people hear a sound only, and Moses shows or declares the words, but cf. 22.

6. Cf. Exod. 20:2; 13:3. The God who demands obedience to these laws is One who has redeemed them from slavery and given them a new national life. This we may call an evangelical truth which in the N. T. receives a deeper application to the individual soul.

7. "Beside me" (RV marg.) is clearer; the sense is, except me thou shalt have no other god or gods.

8–11. Cf. 4:25 ff. The construction of v. 8 is difficult. The sense is, "Thou shalt not make a graven image (of thy God) nor a copy of anything that is in heaven above," etc. In the earlier days of the Hebrew religion such images were tolerated,

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serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and [1] upon the third and upon the fourth generation of
10. them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my [2] commandments.
11. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name [3] in vain.
12. Observe the sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD
13. thy God commanded thee. Six days shalt thou
14. labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is a sabbath unto the LORD thy God: [4] *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor [5] thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor [5]

[1] Gr. Syr. Tar. Vg. om. *and* (so Exod. 20:5). [2] Heb. *his*, but Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. *my* (so Exod. 20:6). [3] m. *for vanity* or falsehood. [4] Heb. om., but Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. add *in it*. [5] Sam. Gr. om. *nor* (*and*).

1 Sam. 15:23; Judg. 8:27; 2 Kgs. 18:4, etc. **Jealous God.** See 4:24. The generations are bound together, and men should take care not to bequeath to their children the evil results of their disobedience. The great preachers, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, had to protest against a fatalistic use of this fact of hereditary influence. The law has two sides; those who love God send forth healthful forces in many directions.

11. Exactly as in Exod. 20:7; the third commandment prohibits the use of the name Yahweh in connection with any vanity or false, unreliable thing, as enchantments or other forms of profanity and falsehood; cf. Ps. 24:4.

12–15. The command to observe the Sabbath should be compared with the somewhat different form in Exod. 20:8–11. Its position in a summary of moral precepts, and the amount of space given to it, shows that it was regarded as of the greatest importance; cf. Exod. 31:12 ff.

12. Exod. has "remember" for **observe** and omits the formal phrase **as the Lord thy God commanded thee.** "Sanctify," set it apart from other days and give it a different treatment.

14. Is fuller than the corresponding clause in Exod., laying

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thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou.

15. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.

16. Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God commanded thee: that thy days may be long, and that it may go well with thee, upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

17. Thou shalt do no murder.

18. Neither shalt thou commit adultery.

19. Neither shalt thou steal.

20. Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.

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additional emphasis upon the humanitarian thought that the servants shall have rest as well as the master.

15. In Exod. 20:11 (P) the commandment is based upon the rest of God after the creation, Gen. 2:2 (P); here, in harmony with the general character of the book, the reason is drawn from Israel's own history. It is a memorial of the great deliverance from Egypt. The Sabbath has its roots in prehistoric times, but in the Hebrew documents we can trace its growth in historical association and religious significance; cf. Isa. 56:2, 6, 7.

16. The phrases, **as Yahweh thy God commanded thee** and **that it may go well with thee**, are lacking in Exod. The first command with promise (see Eph. 6:2; Matt. 15:4): it is the promise which Deuteronomy attaches to obedience in general. Whether the Israelites ever observed real ancestor worship or not, it is clear that parents possessed great authority, and sincere reverence was demanded for them; cf. 21:18–20.

17–20. Here the commands are in a brief simple form, which was probably that of the others at an earlier date.

17. "Do no murder" brings out the proper force of the Hebrew word.

20. The Hebrew word **false** here is the same that in v. 11 is

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21. Neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's wife;
neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's house, his
field, or his manservant, or his maidservant,[1] his ox, or
his ass, or any thing that is thy neighbour's.
22. These words the LORD spake unto all your assembly
in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud,
and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he
added no more. And he wrote them upon two tables
23. of stone, and gave them unto me. And it came to
pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the
Heb. 12:18 darkness,[2] while the mountain did burn with fire, that
ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes,
24. and your elders; and ye said, Behold, the LORD our

[1] Gr. Syr. add *and* (Exod. 20:17). [2] Gr. *fire*.

rendered "vanity or falsehood" (RV marg.), while in Exod. we have the more concrete expression "lie."

21. The rendering "desire" brings out the fact that here we have a different word from that in Exod. "covet," which expresses the same thing in a slightly stronger form. **Neighbour.** A fellow-citizen; the question "Who is my neighbour?" had not been faced in the large sense of Luke 10:29. The different position of the word **wife** from that in the corresponding commandment in Exod. may mean a higher appreciation of the position of woman in the home; cf. 21:10 ff; 22:13 ff., etc. In the present form of the book the Decalogue seems to stand as a parallel to the Deut. legislation or as a brief statement which embodies the spirit of the same.

22. Anticipates 9:9 ff. or is a parallel statement, cf. Exod. 31:18. Only the Ten Commandments were given directly by God; the legislation was imparted through Moses, but see on vs. 4 and 5.

23–27. The people desired that Moses should assume the position of mediator.

23. **Darkness.** The dark clouds of smoke covering the fire; cf. v. 4. **Even all the heads of your tribes,** etc. Probably a later expansion, as we are told that the people were addressed directly.

24. Here is a great wonder: God has spoken directly with them, and they are alive; cf. 4:33.

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God hath shewed us his glory and his greatness, and we
have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we
have seen this day that God doth speak with man, and
25. he liveth. Now therefore why should we die? for
this great fire will consume us: if we hear the voice
of the LORD our God any more, then we shall die.
26. For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice
of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire,
27. as we have, and lived? Go thou near, and hear all
that the LORD our God shall say: and speak thou unto
us all that the LORD our God shall speak unto thee;
28. and we will hear it, and do it. And the LORD heard
the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and
the LORD said unto me, I have heard the voice of the
words of this people, which they have spoken unto
thee: they have well said all that they have spoken.
29. [1]Oh that there were such an heart in them, that they
would fear me, and keep all [2] my commandments al-
ways, that it might be well with them, and with their
30. children for ever! Go say to them, Return ye to
31. your tents. But as for thee, stand thou here by me,
and I will speak unto thee all [3] the commandment,

[1] m. *Oh that they had such an heart as this alway, to fear me, and keep all my commandments, that,* etc. [2] Sam. Gr. om. *all.* [3] Gr. om. *all.*

25–26. Yet such a strange and terrible experience is full of risk; frail mortal man cannot sustain this direct communion with the living God.

27. They desire to have the revelation in human form, and promise obedience to it; cf. Exod. 20: 19 ff.

28–31. Yahweh grants the prayer of the people, and thus the position of Moses receives a twofold justification, the desire of the people and the appointment by their God.

31. **The commandment.** A specific name for the exhortations following (in that case the phrase, **statutes and the judgements,** was added when this exhortation was joined to the legislation),

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and the statutes, and[1] the judgements, which thou shalt teach them, that they may do them in the land which I give them to possess it.

32. Ye shall observe to do therefore as the LORD your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to
33. the right hand or to the left. Ye shall walk in all the way which the LORD your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.

D 6. Now this is the commandment, the statutes, and the judgements, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither
2. ye go over to possess it: that thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee,[2] thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.

[1] Sam. om. *and*. [2] Sam. Gr. add *to-day*.

or a general term of which the words **statutes and judgements** are an expansion.

32–33. Perfect obedience is due from those who possess such a teacher and is the condition of a prosperous life.

3. *The Great Exhortation;* 6:1–11:32 (*except* 9:7b–10:9)

Chaps. 6–9 is a new section, as is shown by the new superscription, 6:1–3; **the statutes and judgements** do not begin until 12:1. The intervening space is filled with a powerful exhortation similar in its style and spirit to parts of Chap. 4, except that we find in 9:7b–10:11 another retrospect. In Chap. 6 we have the beginning and one of the most important parts of this noble appeal.

Chap. 6. Yahweh alone is to be loved and worshipped by the people of Israel. (*a*) 1–3, superscription. (*b*) 4–9, the exhortation to render to Yahweh alone a worship inspired by sincere love. (*c*) 10–19, on no account must the people forget

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3. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD, the God of thy fathers, hath promised[1] unto thee, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

4. Hear, O Israel: [2] the LORD our God is one LORD: [2] Mk. 12:29, 32
5. and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. Matt. 22:37; Mk. 12:30; Lk. 10:27
6. And these words, which I command thee this day,

[1] Gr. reads *to give unto thee a land*, etc. [2] m. *The LORD our God, the LORD is one.* Or, *the LORD is our God, the LORD is one.* Or, *the LORD is our God, the LORD alone.* SV *Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.*

this in the good land which is about to be given to them. (*d*) 20–25, they are exhorted to give instruction to future generations concerning the significance of the commandment.

(*a*). The superscription; 6:1–3. Sets forth, as is often done in this book, long life and prosperity, as rewards of obedience. The repetitions may to some extent be due to later amplifications before the text was finally fixed. The last clause, **a land flowing with milk and honey**, is very awkward in the original; the English versions supply "*in*" the Greek "*to give to thee*," a phrase which may easily have been overlooked.

(*b*) Exhortation to worship Yahweh in love; vs. 4–9. One of the most important passages of the book and in the whole realm of Hebrew literature. While it cannot be claimed as a final declaration of absolute monotheism, it looks steadfastly and moves energetically in that direction. "Hear O Israel: Yahweh is our God, Yahweh alone," — this is the translation which does fullest justice to the form of expression and to the context, the prominent thought being that Yahweh alone and no other god must receive the worship of the Israelites, and not that Yahweh is One in opposition to the many Baals, though that thought is quite consonant with the general teaching of Deuteronomy. In v. 5 we have one of the highest points of O. T. teaching, the demand for a full surrender of the man to the service of the One God; and the suggestion that love is the fulfilment of the law; the central truth often hidden under later Jewish formalism is brought into new light and larger life by the Christian gospel, Matt. 22:37; Mk. 12:29 f.; Lk. 10:27. This great central demand must be made the subject of meditation and teaching.

6. **These words**, *i.e.* the command in 4 and 5, shall be "im-

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7. shall be upon thine heart: and thou shalt teach them
diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them
when thou sittest [1] in thine house,[1] and when thou walk-
est by the way, and when thou liest down, and when
8. thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign
upon thine hand,[2] and they shall be for frontlets be-
9. tween thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the
door posts of thy house, and upon thy gates.
10. And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall bring
thee into the land which he sware unto thy fathers, to
Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee; great
11. and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not, and [3]
houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not,
and [3] cisterns hewn out, which thou hewedst not, vine-

[1] Sam. Gr. *in the house* or *at home*. [2] Sam. *hands*. [3] Sam. Gr. Vg. om. *and*.

pressed" upon the minds of the children, "pricked in" by repetition and emphasis, made a matter of constant conversation and represented by visible signs. Cf. vs. 8, 9 with Exod. 13:16 where the expressions are used in a figurative sense. The word rendered **frontlets** is of uncertain origin and meaning, referring either to a band which encircled the head or to tribal (tattoo) marks. The Jews took these verses quite literally. The passages, Exod. 13:1–16, Deut. 6:4–9, 11:13–21, were written on parchment rolls and placed in cases so that they could be bound on the arm and forehead during morning prayer. These phylacteries are referred to in the N. T. The Deuteronomic passages were also enclosed in cylinders so that they could be fixed on the door-posts of houses or rooms. This "*shĕma'*," so called from the first word of the passage, **Hear** (v. 4), was, no doubt, according to ancient ideas, thought to possess magical virtue, and perhaps Christians also need to be reminded that the texts must be carried into life and not merely written on the walls.

(*c*) Not to forget Yahweh in the Promised Land; vs. 10–19.

10–15. Gratitude to Yahweh their God for giving them a rich land is to be shown by sternly resisting the temptation to go after the gods of their neighbors; thus will they avoid Yahweh's anger, which might easily be kindled for such a serious offence; cf. 8:19–20; 32:13–15.

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yards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not, and
12. thou shalt eat and be full; then beware lest thou forget
the LORD,[1] which brought thee forth out of the land
13. of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt Matt. 4:10 Lk. 4:8
fear the LORD thy God; and him shalt thou serve, and
14. shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other
gods, of the gods of the peoples which are round about
15. you; for the LORD thy God in the midst of thee is a
jealous God; lest the anger of the LORD thy God be
kindled against thee, and he destroy thee from off the
face of the earth.
16. Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted Matt. 4:7 Lk. 4:12
17. him in Massah. Ye shall diligently keep the com-
mandments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies,
and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee.

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. add *thy God.*

10, 11. Though they acquire the results of Canaanite culture, they must not worship the gods to whom the inhabitants ascribed these blessings.

12. **House of bondage.** Lit., *house of slaves;* based on Exod. 13. 13, 14. See also 5:6; 7:8; 8:14, etc.

13. To Yahweh they must show piety (**fear**), worship (**serve**), and acknowledgment in the most solemn transactions of social life (**swear**).

14. On account of change of number, may be an explanatory addition to 13.

15. Cf. 4:24, 1:42; 8:20.

16–19. Israel must not presume to put Yahweh to the test, but rather render lowly obedience, for that is the way to real prosperity.

16. They must not in a light-hearted fashion make experiments as to Yahweh's anger, as was done at Massah, Exod. 17:2–7. **Massah.** Proper name formed from the Hebrew root used here in the sense of "to test."

17–19. Amplifies the thought which receives so much emphasis in the Deuteronomic school, that obedience to the Law is the condition of receiving Yahweh's blessing; cf. Exod. 23:27.

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18. And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the LORD:[1] that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land
19. which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to thrust out all thine enemies from before thee, as the LORD hath spoken.
20. [2] When thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgements, which the LORD our God hath com-
21. manded you? then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the LORD
22. brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand: and the LORD shewed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his house,
23. before our eyes: and he brought us out from thence, [3] that he might bring us in,[3] to give us the land which
24. he sware unto our fathers. And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our GOD, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as at this day.
25. And it shall be righteousness unto us, if we ob-

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. add *thy God.* [2] Sam. Gr. insert *And it shall be.* [3] Gr. om.

(*d*) 20–25. The children of later generations are to be taught the origin and significance of the Law, Exod. 12:26 f., 13:14 f.

20. "(And it shall be) when in future times the children shall ask concerning the significance of these ordinances they shall reply, Slaves were we, etc. Us did Yahweh bring out, etc.," pointing to the great deliverance at the Exodus as the origin of their national life and the birth of their religion.

24. **All these statutes.** Implies that the legal code, 12–26, is viewed as already present, although in the form in which the book lies before us it is not yet formulated.

25. Should probably read, "And it shall be righteousness unto us before Yahweh our God if we observe to do all this commandment," etc. Cf. 24:13. **Righteousness.** The word here has

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serve to do all this commandment before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

7. When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and shall cast out[1] many nations before thee, the Hittite, and the Girgashite, and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, 2. seven nations greater and mightier than thou; and when the LORD thy God shall deliver them up before thee, and thou shalt smite them; then thou shalt [2]utterly destroy[2] them; thou shalt make no covenant Acts 13:19

[1] m. Heb. *pluck off.* [2] m. Heb. *devote.*

almost the force of "justification" so that then the people could say: "Our God judges that we have fulfilled our part of the covenant, by obedience to the Law, and he will on his side vindicate our character, and show by palpable signs that he is on our side."

(*e*) Warning against Intercourse with the Canaanites; Chap. 7.

This chapter continues the great sermon; it warns the Israelites against having any intercourse with the Canaanites; they must rather place them under the ban.

1–5. This they must do because they are Yahweh's servants, having been redeemed by him.

6–11. If they carry out this task faithfully they will receive Yahweh's blessing.

12–15. And he will support them in battle.

1–5. To escape the temptation of idolatry, intercourse with the inhabitants of the land must be avoided.

1. Cf. Josh. 3:10; 24:11, the only other places where seven Canaanite nations are mentioned. In this case it is a grouping for rhetorical effect; it increases the impressiveness of the picture.

2. **Utterly destroy them.** Heb. *devote* them; cf. 2:34; 3:6, and especially the Deuteronomic Law of the Ban, 20:16–18. No covenant or treaty was to be made with, nor kindness shown to, alien peoples. This expresses the later ideal of religious purity and separation rather than the actual historical facts of the earliest times.

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3. with them, nor shew mercy unto them: neither shalt
thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou
shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt
4. thou take unto thy son. For he will turn away thy
son from following me, that they[1] may serve other
gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against
5. you, and he will destroy thee quickly. But thus shall
ye deal with them; ye shall break down their altars,
and dash in pieces their pillars,[2] and hew down their
Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire.
6. For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God:[3]
the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be[4] a peculiar
people unto himself[4] above[5] all peoples that are upon

[1] Sam. Gr. Vg. *he.* [2] m. *obelisks.* [3] Sam. Gr. Syr. add *and.* [4] SV *a people for his own possession.* [5] m. *out of.*

4. The reason for avoiding mixed marriages. We should probably read, "he will turn away thy son from following Yahweh so that he will serve other gods."

5. On these expressions see Chap. 12; for the Deuteronomic preacher these were elements of the popular religion and regarded as quite foreign to the worship of Yahweh; cf. Exod. 23:24; 34:13.

6–11. Their worship belongs exclusively to Yahweh, their Redeemer.

6. A very important statement rich in great religious ideas. **Holy.** Specially set apart to the worship of Yahweh, keeping clear of all ceremonies which involve relation to other gods. In earlier times when faith received its highest expression in the words "Yahweh, Israel's God," the thought of election did not come so clearly into play, but now, when the life of Israel is placed against the background of the world's life, it is made prominent, "And thee hath Yahweh thy God chosen," etc. In Isa. 40–55 it is set forth in splendid style. Here it is election to privilege, — the election of the nation, not yet of the individual, cf. Jer. 1; in Isa. 42:1–4, etc., election to service. This is regarded as taking place at the Exodus; cf. 4:20 and Hos. 11:1. **Peculiar.** Special, private, Eccles. 2:8; 1 Chron. 29:3. They are Yahweh's special property, made so by this election; cf. 14:2; 26:18; Exod. 19:5.

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7. the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all
8. peoples: but because the LORD loveth you, and because he would keep the oath which he sware unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage,
9. from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God; the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments
10. to a thousand generations; and repayeth them that

7, 8. The reason of this election is given; on the negative side, it was not on account of their great numbers, for they were one of the smallest peoples. Passages such as 10:22; 26:5, are not necessarily contradictions, but rhetorical expressions on the other side. On the positive side, the real cause was Yahweh's **love**, not elsewhere expressed in the Pentateuch, but which has been proclaimed by Hosea; cf. Jer. 31:3; Isa. 43:4. This love was promised to their fathers and showed itself in ransoming them from Egyptian slavery, 4:20.

9, 10. From their own history, then, let them learn Yahweh's true character. This is one of the striking features of the Deuteronomic exhortation that it lays such great stress on the knowledge of Yahweh's character which a devout observer may draw from the facts of their own national history, 6:12, 21. From this source they may learn that Yahweh is the true God, and the faithful God who keeps his covenant and carries out his promises. In these two verses we have a paraphrase and comment upon Exod. 20:6; Deut. 5:10; it takes the "thousands" to mean thousands of generations, a rich rhetorical suggestion of the lasting influence of God's mercy. With regard to the punishment also the emphasis is placed differently here, without denying the abiding influence of the chastisement the present passage makes prominent the thought that the sinner himself will quickly in his own person begin to reap the reward of his deeds. Thus a clear doctrine of retribution is formulated which contains an essential truth, but which was capable, when hardened into a dogma, of causing much trouble, as the discussion in the Book of Job shows. On **covenant**, see 4:13. The word rendered **mercy** is an impor-

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hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his
11. face. Thou shalt therefore keep the commandment, and [1] the statutes, and the judgements, which I command thee this day, to do them.
12. And it shall come to pass, because ye hearken to these judgements, and keep, and do them, that the LORD thy God shall keep with thee the covenant and the
13. mercy which he sware unto thy fathers: and he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: he will also bless the fruit of thy body and the fruit of thy ground, thy corn and thy wine and thine oil, the increase of thy kine and the young of thy flock, in the land which he [2] sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

[1] Sam. om. *and*. [2] Sam. Gr. *Yahweh*.

tant word in the Old Testament and means kindness or loving-kindness; cf. Gen. 24: 12; Hos. 6: 4, 6.

12–26. This passage expands and illustrates the thought presented in v. 9; the law there laid down will be seen at work in their national life; if they obey the commandment, Yahweh will grant them his blessing (12–15) and will support them in their struggle with the Canaanites (16–26). The whole passage should be compared with the conclusion of the "Book of the Covenant," Exod. 23: 25–33.

12. The covenant is a matter of mutual obligation; the two parties to it must each **keep** their share of the contract. It may have sprung originally from the "loving-kindness" of their God, but its continuance is conditioned by the obedience of the people.

13. And following verses show the form that the blessing will take, an increase of material possessions of all kinds, and freedom from terrible diseases by which other nations are afflicted. The fruits of the earth, which men attributed to Baal, come from Yahweh in accordance with his promise to their fathers. Increase of the cattle also will come from the same blessing, and the large families that are so highly prized by those who have to till the ground and face numerous enemies (Exod. 23: 26; Ps. 127, 128). **Young**, or increase, **of the flock** is represented in the original by a peculiar expression, "Ashtoreths of the flock," which contains in

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14. Thou shalt be blessed above all peoples: there shall
not be male or female barren among you, or among
15. your cattle. And the LORD will take away from thee
all sickness; and he will put none of the evil diseases
of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee, but will
16. lay them upon all them that hate thee. And thou
shalt consume all the peoples which the LORD thy God
shall deliver unto thee; thine eye shall not pity them:
neither shalt thou serve their gods; for that will be
a snare unto thee.
17. If thou shalt say in thine heart, These nations are
18. more than I; how can I dispossess them? thou shalt
not be afraid of them: thou shalt well remember what
the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all

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some form a reminiscence of a heathen goddess of fertility; if the writer was conscious of this, he may have used it deliberately to claim all such powers for the God of Israel. In such things they will be blessed above all people, and in their good fortune will be seen the superiority of their God.

15. **The evil diseases of Egypt.** Various forms of diseases which, on account of climatic conditions, affected specially the skin, eyes, and bowels; from these dreadful afflictions they are to be free, and these very same afflictions will be used as a means of punishment upon those who hate them; cf. Exod. 15: 26; Deut. 28: 27, 35, 60.

16–24. Another form that the blessing will take is the gift of courage and strength to enable them to subdue their foes.

16. **Consume**, lit. *eat*, just as elsewhere the sword is said to *eat* or devour peoples. In Num. 14: 9, it is said of the people of the land, "they are bread for us." As a matter of fact, the Hebrews were never in a position to eat up other nations, and in the earliest days this keen sense of a deep religious separation was not present. The real weight of the verse is in its second half, the warning against serving other gods, as this impure worship is likely to prove a snare to them; cf. Exod. 23: 27–33.

18. Here is a specific manner in which the teaching of history is to be applied for inspiration and help in the present. This clear recognition of the guidance of Israel's God in the realm of national history is one of the prominent thoughts of the book. The great

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19. Egypt; the great temptations[1] which thine eyes saw,
and[2] the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty
hand, and the stretched out arm, whereby the LORD
thy God brought thee out: so shall the LORD thy
God do unto all the peoples of whom thou art afraid.
20. Moreover the LORD thy God will send the hornet
among them, until they that are left, and[3] hide them-
21. selves, perish[3] from before thee. Thou shalt not be
affrighted at them: for the LORD thy God is in the
DR 22. midst of thee, a great God and a terrible. And the
LORD thy God will cast out those nations before thee
by little and little: thou mayest not consume them
at once[4] lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee.

[1] m. *trials.* [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. Tar. om. *and.* [3] m. *hide themselves from thee, perish.* [4] m. *quickly.*

deliverance from Egypt is part of a living tradition which is rich in religious significance.

19. Cf. 4 : 3, 9. **Temptations**, *i.e.* trials or provings, 6 : 16. These wonderful events subjected the character and temper of Pharaoh to various testings.

20. Cf. Exod. 23 : 28. Their God can use all kinds of agents to support them and to do the work thoroughly. Even the hornets shall render service, penetrating into the hiding-places of the remnant of the enemy and inflicting damage upon them. Under such circumstances fear is treason against their God.

22. This verse does not agree very well with the context and takes a different view from that given in 9 : 3. Here the destruction is to take place gradually, there "quickly." It is based upon Exod. 23 : 29–30, where we are told that they will not be driven out "in one year." The verse is probably an editorial note by one who interpreted the promise in the light of the well-known fact that the Canaanite inhabitants lingered long in the land. The reason here given for the slowness of the destruction is that the sudden depopulation of the country might cause the increase of wild beasts; cf. 2 Kgs. 17 : 25. This should be compared with the statement in Judg. 2 : 21–23, where the reason is that it may be proved whether Israel will keep the way of Yahweh to walk therein.

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23. But the LORD thy God shall deliver them up before D
thee, and shall discomfit them with a great discom-
fiture, until they be destroyed.
24. And he shall deliver their kings into thine hand, and
thou shalt make their name to perish from under
heaven: there shall no man be able to stand before
25. thee, until thou have destroyed them. The graven
images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt
not covet the silver or the gold that is on them, nor
take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it
26. is an abomination to the LORD thy God: and thou
shalt not bring an abomination into thine house, and
become a devoted thing like unto it: thou shalt utterly

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23. Complete destruction of the enemy is now promised; so complete shall this be that even their very name shall be blotted out, 9:14; 25:19.

25–26 form the climax of this part of the exhortation; the important thing is that they should keep themselves free from the idolatrous practices of the Canaanites. The core or framework of the image is made of wood and then covered with silver or gold; cf. Isa. 30:22; 40:19. Hence it could be burnt. The precious metals thus used have become defiled by their contact with the idol and by their employment in the service of a foreign god. Therefore, any one who through greed takes them into his possession shares their defilement and brings upon himself the severe judgment of Yahweh. The story of Achan, Josh. 7, should be read as a commentary on this prohibition. To the people of those days there was an actual magical or demonic power in the metal that had been in close contact with the idolatrous worship; it belonged to a foreign sphere, and whoever touched it was rendered unclean and liable to Yahweh's fierce anger. No language can be too strong to express this fact; **thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it**; **for it is a devoted thing**; these words express a powerful religious feeling. **An abomination to Yahweh thy God.** Used several times in the legislative section as the ground of a prohibition; in the Levitical legislation it is confined to sins of unchastity. That which is **devoted** or placed under the ban is either destroyed or cut off from the life of the people by being presented to the sanctuary. **The extent to which**

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detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a devoted thing.

D[R] 8. All the commandment which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the

D 2. LORD sware unto your fathers. And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God hath led thee [1] these forty years [1] in the wilderness, that he might humble thee, to prove thee, to know what

[1] Gr. om.

this "devotion" was carried out, varied, as may be seen by comparing with 1 Sam 15.

Chap. 8. This chapter is one of the most striking and impressive sections of the Great Exhortation. It contains three lines of exhortation, the most important one being the appeal to history and the powerful plea not to forget God in the hour of prosperity. The first verse contains the statement that increase and prosperity will follow upon obedience to **the commandment**; a thought which is subject to much repetition in Deuteronomy, and which became the chief dogma of this school of writers. The last two verses treat the other side of the theme declaring that destruction will come as the punishment of apostasy; if the Israelites go after foreign gods, they will meet the fate which is now about to come upon the Canaanite peoples. In the remaining thirteen verses the meaning of the past history is unfolded, and the words "Lest ye forget" are filled with sacred significance.

(*f*) Appeal to history; 8:1–6.

1. A sort of superscription to the chapter consisting of well-known Deuteronomic forms of speech. See 6:25; 8:8–22; 15:5; 19:9, etc.

2–6. The forty years of the wilderness journey was a time of discipline appointed by their God as a means of revealing their true religious condition. The legislation about to be given, and to which this exhortation forms the introduction, was promulgated at the close of the forty years of wandering, but that does not mean that there was no law before that time by means of which their obedience could be tested. Men must not put God to the proof, 6:16, but God has a right to test men and, according to the simple thought of that time, it seems to be implied that he needs to do so; cf. v. 16; 13:3; Exod. 16:4.

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was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his
3. commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and
suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna,
which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers Matt. 4:4
know; that he might make thee know that man doth Lk. 4:4
not live by bread only, but by every thing that pro-
ceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.
4. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did
5. thy foot swell, these forty years. And thou shalt
consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his
6. son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee. And
thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy
7. God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him. For the

3. The hunger and the way in which their needs were met should teach them their complete dependence on Yahweh. The mystery of the manna is insisted upon; **which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know**, the strongest possible way of saying that it was a mysterious, secret provision. It is something uncommon, set in opposition to the **bread**, the common bread of man's own providing. The contrast here is between the ordinary blessing and the special provision of the wonder-working word. In the words of our Lord, Matt. 4:4, the contrast is between the material and the ideal or spiritual bread. Yahweh, having given bread to men who were in direst need, desires their gratitude and trust.

4. See 29:5. This feature is not mentioned in the older history. Some ancient Jewish commentators treated this verse as a literal statement that the clothes of the people grew upon them like "the shell of a snail"; that kind of interpretation turns fine suggestive poetry into very wooden prose.

5. The word **man** here is different from the one used in v. 3; there it is the generic term for humanity, including men, women, and children, bond and free; here it is the distinctive word for man; the man was head of the family or tribe; as such a man exercises discipline for the good of the whole, so is it with their God.

(*g*) Warning against forgetting Yahweh; vs. 7–20.

7–18. They must guard against the temptation to forget God which will come in the hour of ease and prosperity. Adversity has had its danger; they were prone to murmur against their God

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LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land,[1] a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, spring-
8. ing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig trees and pomegranates;
9. a land of oil olives[2] and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.
10. And thou shalt eat and be full, and thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath
11. given thee. Beware lest thou forget the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgements, and his statutes, which I command thee
12. this day: lest when thou hast eaten and art full,
13. and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver

[1] Sam. Gr. add *and a large* (Exod. 3:8). [2] SV. *olive trees.*

and think that his help was often delayed too long, but success and luxury may prove to be even a greater temptation. There is peril in the very beauty and goodness of the land.

7–9. The patriotism as well as the religious faith of the teacher is revealed in his eloquent and enthusiastic description of the blessings of Canaan. This land is Yahweh's gift to them; its products come from him, not from Baal. It is richly supplied with water and brings forth all kinds of grain and fruit suitable for food for its inhabitants. If the country itself was not rich in mineral wealth, such things were not far away. In it or in its immediate neighborhood there was all that men required to satisfy their various physical and social needs.

10. Men should therefore "say grace" at the table, offer hearty thanks, receive such blessings in a spirit of worship, 1 Sam. 9:13.

11–18. Shows the folly of spiritual arrogance; the wickedness of that pride which leads them in the hour of success to forget the Giver of all good and ascribe to their own cleverness and cunning the rich result of their toil. From v. 14a to the end of 16 forms a long and somewhat involved amplification, producing a kind of

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and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is
14. multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou
forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth
out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage;
15. who led thee through the great and terrible wilder-
ness, *wherein were* fiery serpents and scorpions, and
thirsty ground where was no water; who brought thee
16. forth water out of the rock of flint; who fed thee in
the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew
not; that he might humble thee, and that he might
17. prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end: and
thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of
18. mine hand[1] hath gotten me this wealth. But thou
shalt remember the LORD thy God, for it is he that
giveth thee power to get wealth;[2] that he may estab-
lish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as
19. at this day. And it shall be, if thou shalt forget the
LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve
them, and worship them, I testify against you this

[1] SV In this and similar cases *my* hand. [2] Gr. inserts *and*.

sentence not common in Hebrew. It would make a good connection to read, **then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget Yahweh thy God . . . (v. 17) and thou say in thine heart, My power**, etc. The intervening words may have been added by a scribe from vs. 2, 3 or may be repeated by the author for rhetorical effect. The writer of this chapter certainly wished to use all the forces of his powerful, persuasive style against this base sin of ingratitude.

14. **Then.** In the hour of success comes the supreme temptation; the slavery of Egypt, the terrors of the wilderness, the perils and privations, all are in danger of being forgotten; cf. Hos. 11:1; Jer. 11:2 ff.

17. Then comes the secret self-satisfaction and self-congratulation which leaves God out of account, cf. Lk. 12:19; an impressive thought suitable for all ages.

19–20. If Israel after all this care and enlightenment worships

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20. day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations
which the LORD maketh to perish before you, so shall
ye perish; because ye would not hearken unto the
voice of the LORD your God.

9. Hear, O Israel: thou art to pass over Jordan this
day, to go in to possess[1] nations greater and mightier
than thyself, cities great and fenced up to heaven,
2. a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom
thou knowest, and of whom thou hast heard say, Who
3. can stand before the sons of Anak? Know there-
fore this day, that the LORD thy God is he which goeth
over before thee as a devouring fire; he shall destroy
them, and he shall bring them down before thee:
so shalt thou drive them out, and make them to perish
4. quickly,[2] as the LORD hath spoken unto thee. Speak

[1] SV *dispossess.* [2] Gr. om. *quickly.*

and serves false gods, then there is no other way of salvation; upon such stupid apostasy doom sure and final will come.

(*h*) Warning against self-conceit; 9:1–7a. The fourth division of this exhortation contains a warning against self-conceit in view of the destruction of the inhabitants of the land. The Israelites must not think that it is because of their merit that the Canaanites will be conquered. The reason rather is twofold. (1) Those tribes have deserved destruction by their idolatry and general wickedness, and (2) Yahweh gives the land to Israel on account of his promise to the fathers, therefore the proper spirit will not be pride in their warlike success, but humility and fear lest they come to deserve the same fate.

2. It is well to realize fully the greatness of the undertaking; their opponents are many and mighty. **Who can stand before the sons of Anak?** either a proverbial form of speech or a quotation from the report of the spies; see 1:28.

3. The possibility and certainty of victory lies in the fact that their God goes before them; cf. 31:3. **Devouring fire.** The same phrase is used in 4:24 to warn the Israelites against offending the "jealous God" by image-worship.

4. When the Canaanites are driven out by the power of Israel's

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not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath thrust them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: [1] whereas for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before
5. thee.[1] Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go in to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may establish the word which the LORD[2] sware unto thy[3] fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and
6. to Jacob. Know therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people.
7. Remember, forget thou not, how thou provokedst D[2]
the LORD thy God to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that thou[4] wentest forth out of the land of

[1] Gr. om. v. 4b. [2] Sam. Gr. om. *the LORD*, reads simply *he*. [3] Gr. *our*. [4] Sam. Gr. Syr. *ye*.

God, it will be a fatal mistake for them to take the glory to themselves; Yahweh has satisfactory reason for his action, but the reason is not in their merit or goodness. The wickedness of the nations must be punished and the promises to the patriarchs fulfilled.

7. If Israel will not obey the exhortation to remember the past, the facts of history will show that by their perverse rebellious spirit they have deserved punishment and not favor.

(*i*) Historical retrospect (related to 1:6–3:29), 9:7b–10:9.

7b–11. Here in the middle of the sermon we have a historical review inserted mainly for the purpose of proving and illustrating the charge made against Israel in 19:6 that it is a stiffnecked people. This section may have been composed by an editor for the purpose of expanding this thought, or it may have been transposed from some other place. In substance and style it resembles the first portion of the book, Chaps. 1–3. It is based upon the earlier history of JE found in Exodus, often reproducing passages verbatim with the changes from the third to the first person.

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Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the LORD.

8. Also in Horeb ye provoked the LORD to wrath, and the LORD was angry with you to have destroyed you.

9. When I was gone up in to the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights; I did neither eat bread

10. nor drink water. And the LORD delivered unto me the two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them *was written* according to all the words, which the LORD spake with [1] you in the mount out of

11. the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly. And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the LORD gave me the two tables of stone,

12. even the tables of the covenant. And the LORD said unto me, Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of

[1] Sam. Gr. read *unto*.

7. All the time of the wilderness journey until they came to the land of Moab they had shown a rebellious spirit.

8. Specially at Horeb, when the law was given, did they provoke Yahweh's fierce anger. See full account in Exod. 32–34.

9. The phrase **tables of the covenant** is peculiar to this chapter; cf. vs. 11, 15. On **covenant**, see 4: 13; cf. Exod. 24: 12–18. In the present text of Exodus the **forty days and forty nights** is mentioned only in 34: 28, which relates to a different and later occasion.

10. See Exod. 31: 18. **The day of the assembly.** A designation of the day when the Law was given, peculiar to Deuteronomy.

11. As this verse is a repetition of v. 10, the former may possibly be an addition composed of well-known phrases.

12. This and the following verses should be compared carefully with Exod. 32: 7 ff., as a specimen of the dependence of the later history upon the earlier documents, *e.g.* "And Yahweh spake unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people which thou

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Egypt have corrupted themselves; they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded
13. them; they have made them a molten image. Furthermore the LORD spake unto me, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people:
14. let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven: and I will make of
15. thee a nation mightier and greater than they. So I turned and came down from the mount, and the mount burned with fire: and the two tables of the
16. covenant were in my two hands. And I looked, and, behold, ye had sinned against the LORD your God; ye had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which the LORD had com-
17. manded you. And I took hold of the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands, and brake them before
18. your eyes. And I fell down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and forty nights; I did neither eat

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broughtest up out of the land of Egypt, hath done corruptly: they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image, etc." (See Introd., p. 6.)

13. Introduces that which is the main purpose of this section, — Yahweh's judgment upon the "faithless nation," **it is a stiffnecked people.**

14. Yahweh commands Moses to slacken his hold so that he may destroy the people, and promises to make from his one faithful servant a greater and stronger nation. Note that, at this point, in Exod. 32: 10 f., Moses makes a powerful intercessory appeal, giving reasons why the people should be spared. "And Yahweh repented of the evil which he said he would do unto his people."

15–17. Moses coming down from the mountain sees the transgression of the people, and in disappointment and anger breaks the tables of the covenant in the presence of the people.

18–20. Moses makes intercession for the people and for Aaron. **As at the first**, see v. 9. This stay in the mountain is evidently

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bread nor drink water; because of all your sin[1] which
ye sinned, in doing that which was evil in the sight of
Heb. 12 : 12 19. the LORD, to provoke him to anger. For I was afraid
of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith the LORD
was wroth against you to destroy you. But the LORD
20. hearkened unto me that time also. And the LORD
was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him:
21. and I prayed for Aaron also the same time. And I
took your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt
it with fire, and stamped it, grinding it very small,
until it was as fine as dust: and I cast the dust
thereof into the brook that descended out of the
22. mount. And at Taberah, and at Massah, and at
Kibroth-hattaavah, ye provoked the LORD to wrath.
23. And when the LORD sent you from Kadesh-barnea,
saying, Go up and possess the land which I have
given you; then ye rebelled against the command-
ment of the LORD your God, and ye believed him not,
nor hearkened to his voice.

[1] Sam. Gr. *sins* (pl.).

the same as that mentioned in 10 : 10, and takes place after the event narrated in v. 21. The intercession for Aaron is not mentioned in the earlier history. Moses, filled with fear at the consequences of this terrible apostasy, pleads with God and prevails. As a classic example of intercessory prayer in the Old Testament, see Gen. 18 : 23 ff. Other instances of intercession by Moses are Num. 11 : 2; 12 : 13 f.; 14 : 13–20, etc.

21. This took place, of course, before the intercession mentioned in the previous verses. In Exod. 32 : 20 we are told that Moses, having strewed the powder upon the water, made the people drink of it; the special feature supplied by this verse is that "the brook descended out of the mount."

22. Other illustrations of their rebellious spirit are now supplied. **Taberah**, cf. Num. 11 : 1–3. **Massah**, 6 : 16; Exod. 17 : 2–7. **Kibroth-hattaavah**, Num. 11 : 4–35.

23. The statements of this verse with its particular phraseology

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24. Ye have been rebellious against the LORD from the
25. day that I[1] knew you. So I fell down before the LORD the forty days and forty nights that I fell down; because the LORD had said he would destroy you.
26. And I prayed unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed through thy greatness, which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt with a[2] mighty
27. hand. Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; look not unto the stubbornness of this people,
28. nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin: lest[3] the land whence thou broughtest us out say, Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land which he promised unto them, and because he hated them, he hath brought them out to slay them in the wilder-

[1] Sam. Gr. read *he*. [2] Sam. Gr. *thy*. [3] Sam. Gr. add *the people of*.

are found in the fuller account of Chap. 1; see vs. 19, 21, 26, 32.

24. Repeats in stronger form the reproach of v. 7. Read with Gr. and Sam., "from the day that he knew you." Perhaps this and the two preceding verses are an editorial expansion.

25. From this point to the end of the chapter we have the intercession of Moses with the pleas advanced in their behalf. Similar to Exod. 32: 12 ff., this verse takes up again the thread of v. 18.

26. Moses says **destroy not thy people**, laying stress upon their relationship to the God of Israel. See v. 12 where, in the announcement of their sin, Yahweh says to Moses "thy people . . . have corrupted themselves." Yahweh will surely not allow all that he has done in the past to turn out fruitless.

27. He will be faithful to his own promise to the patriarchs; this is regarded as a powerful plea; the oath to the fathers is set over against the present sinfulness of the people. Let God look on the former and turn away from the latter, then he can be merciful.

28. **Lest the land**, *i.e. the people of* the land, as in Gr. and Sam. The honor of Israel's God is involved; he must not lay himself open to slanderous misinterpretations.

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29. ness. Yet they are thy people and thine inheritance,
which thou broughtest out [1] by thy great power and
by thy stretched out arm.
10. At that time the LORD said unto me, Hew thee
two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up
unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of
2. wood. And I will write on the tables the words that
were on the first tables which thou brakest, and thou
3. shalt put them in the ark. So I made an ark of
acacia wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto
the first, and went up into the mount, having the
4. two tables in mine hand. And he wrote on the tables,
according to the first writing, the ten commandments,[2]
which the LORD spake unto you in the mount out of
the midst of the fire [3]in the day of the assembly: [3]
5. and the LORD gave them unto me. And I turned

[1] Sam. Gr. add *from Egypt.* [2] m. Heb. *words.* [3] Gr. om.

29. Tender and pathetic; after all the weakness and failure there is still a living relationship between the people and their God; the great redemption in the past is prophetic of permanent blessing.

Chap. 10 : 1–5. Tells how Moses, according to the divine command, hews out two new tables of stone, and makes an ark or box of acacia wood to place them in when once the writing has been restored. Thus the prayer of their leader is answered, and the people are once more set in covenant relation with their God. As usual, the history is based upon JE, Exod. 34 : 1, 2, 4, but in that document as it is now preserved there is no mention of the ark, though in its original form it may have contained this statement. P has a different account, Exod. 35 : 30 ff.; 36 : 2; 37 : 1; according to these passages Bezalel makes the ark *after* the return of Moses from the mountain. The only point of similarity between this account and that of P is the material of which the ark is made, **acacia wood.**

4. See Exod. 34 : 28; compare also 9 : 10, and the statement in 5 : 4, that the ten words were spoken " in the mount out of the midst of the fire."

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and came down from the mount, and put the tables
in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as
6. the LORD commanded me. (And the children of
Israel journeyed from [1] Beeroth Bene-jaakan to
Moserah: there Aaron died, and there he was buried;
and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in
7. his stead. From thence they journeyed unto Gudgo-
dah; and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land of
8. brooks of water. At that time the LORD [2] separated
the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of
the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister unto
9. him, and to bless in his name, unto this day. Where-
fore Levi hath no portion nor inheritance with his
brethren; the LORD is his inheritance, according as
10. [3] the LORD thy God [3] spake unto him.) And I stayed D[R]

[1] Or, *the wells of the children of Jaakan.* [2] SV *set apart.* [3] Gr. om. reads simply *he.*

6–7. A fragment from a list of wilderness stations. Probably an editorial note derived originally from E. Note (1) it interrupts the speech of Moses which is resumed in 8 or 10. (2) It uses the third person instead of second, which is usual in the retrospects. (3) It breaks the chronological sequence, as the death of Aaron must have taken place a considerable time after the sojourn at Horeb, Num. 20: 8, 10, 22 ff. (P). (4) In Num. 33 the names of these places, whose situation is unknown, appear in a slightly varied form, but in a different order, and Aaron is said to have died on Mount Hor.

8–9. The mention of the ark leads to a statement of the priestly functions of the Levites connected therewith **at that time**, the time mentioned in vs. 1–5 when the ark was prepared. In Deut. the priests bear the ark, see 31: 9; in P this duty is performed by the Levites in a narrower sense, an inferior order of officials. Here the full priestly functions are attributed to the whole tribe of Levi, **to stand before Yahweh** for the purpose of ministering to him, 18: 5, to bless in his name, a priestly and, on some special occasions, a kingly action, Num. 6: 23; 2 Sam. 6: 18. This is their position at the time of the writer, and explains how it is that they have no inheritances, but must live on the gifts of the people.

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in the mount, [1]as at the first time,[1] forty days and forty nights: and the LORD hearkened unto me that
11. time also; the LORD would not destroy thee. And the LORD said unto me, Arise, take thy journey before the people; and they shall go in and possess the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give unto them.
D 12. And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,
13. to keep the commandments of the LORD[2] and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy
14. good? Behold, unto the LORD thy God belongeth the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, the earth, with all that therein is.

[1] Gr. om. [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. add *thy God*.

10–11. We must either regard these verses as a recapitulation, cf. 9: 18 ff., so as to link the command *to break up* from Horeb with 10: 5, or begin a new paragraph here, on the supposition that we have a different tradition from that represented in 9: 16 ff., viz. that Moses, before he went down from the mountain, undertook his task of intercession and was heard; cf. 9: 14; Ex. 32: 10.

(*j*) 10: 10–11: 32. Final section of the Great Exhortation. In this part there is no very clear consecutive course of thought; various motives for loyalty and obedience are adduced, and thoughts presented before are made the subject of persuasive repetition. This plea for faithful observance of the divine commands serves as a transition to the body of laws.

12–22. An earnest appeal for love and loyalty towards One who has guided them so graciously in the past.

12. What Yahweh demands is the full recognition of his sovereignty and a complete surrender to his service in thought and life. The searching question contained in this verse may be a reminiscence of that noble passage, Mic. 6: 8. This comprehensive demand for reverence and love shows to what an advanced stage Hebrew religion had already attained. See 4: 10; 6: 5; 8: 6.

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15. Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love
them, and he chose their seed after them, even you
16. above[1] all peoples, as at this day. Circumcise there-
fore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-
17. necked. For the LORD your God, he is God of gods, Acts 10:34
and Lord of lords, the great God,[2] the mighty, and the Rev. 17:14; 19:16
terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh
18. reward. He doth execute [3]the judgement of[3] the
fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in
19. giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the
stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

[1] m. *out of*. [2] Sam. Gr. add *and*. [3] SV *justice for*.

15. A tremendous fact for them to consider is that although Yahweh is the supreme Lord of all the world, the God of the highest heaven as well as of earth, he has freely chosen this people and set them in a special relationship to himself because of the love that he bore to their fathers, 7:8.

16. The rite of circumcision in the literal sense is nowhere mentioned in Deut., but this figurative use is found again, 30:6. Here we see that this book is largely under the influence of the prophetic teaching which tends to lower the importance of the merely external and lay emphasis on the inward, spiritual significance of the Law's demand. This particular form of teaching receives its clearest expression in Jeremiah, and even this verse may be dependent on him; see Jer. 4:4; 6:10; 9:26. In their dealings with this great God, one of their supreme needs is a receptive heart, a teachable spirit.

17. The sublime majesty, terrible greatness, and absolute justice of God is another reason for unswerving loyalty and faithful service.

19. This must not be mere theology; because God cares for the oppressed and friendless, therefore they must show the same spirit of kindness. **Stranger.** A better translation of the Hebrew word (*ger*) is "*sojourner*." As distinct from the foreigner who lives in another country and with whom the Israelite comes into contact only in case of war or in commerce, the "*sojourner*" is a man of another tribe or district who lives within the bounds of Israel and is dependent for protection upon some clan or patron. Commands in his favor are found in the early code, JE, Exod. 20:

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20. Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; [1]him shalt thou
serve; and to him shalt thou cleave, and by his name
21. shalt thou swear. He is thy praise, and he is thy
God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible
D^R 22. things, which thine eyes have seen. Thy fathers
Acts 7 : 14 went down into Egypt with threescore and ten per-
sons; and now the LORD thy God hath made thee as
the stars of heaven for multitude.
D 11. Therefore thou shalt love the LORD thy God, and
keep his charge, and[2] his statutes, and his judgements,
2. and his commandments, alway. And know ye this

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. Tar. Vg. add *and*. [2] Sam. om. *and*.

10; 22 : 21; 23 : 9, 12; and in Deut. kindness and justice are repeatedly demanded for him, 1 : 16; 10 : 19; 24 : 14, 17, etc.

20. Repeated from 6 : 13. **By his name shalt thou swear.** On solemn occasions men swear by the one whom they acknowledge as highest and most powerful; to swear by other gods is a sign of infidelity; see Jer. 5 : 7; 12 : 16.

21. He is the object of their praise (Jer. 17 : 14) and worthy to be held in highest reverence because of his great deeds manifested in Israel's marvellous history.

22. A particular illustration; only a few people went into Egypt, but now in direct descent from them there is a great nation. The number seventy is elsewhere preserved only in P, Gen. 46 : 27; Exod. 1 : 5. The verse may be an addition here; probably the Deuteronomic preacher was thinking of the miraculous deliverance from the power of Egypt, Exod. 14, rather than of the rapid growth of the nation.

Chap. 11 brings the conclusion of the Great Exhortation and the transition to the actual legislation. At the conclusion of the previous chapter the writer has pointed to Yahweh's miraculous deeds as a motive for obedience; he now takes up and expands this thought in the first nine verses.

1. The phrase **keep his charge** is not found elsewhere in Deut., and the whole verse may easily be an editorial repetition.

2–7. Those who have seen the discipline of their God, his great deeds in Egypt and the wilderness, are called upon to recognize its spiritual significance. The writer of this long sentence, which he gives as it were in one breath, seems to have forgotten

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day: for *I speak* not with your children which have
not known, and which have not seen the chastise-
ment[1] of the LORD your God, his greatness, [2]his
3. mighty hand, and his stretched out arm, and his
signs, and his works, which he did in the midst of
Egypt unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all
4. his land; and what he did unto the army of Egypt,
unto their horses, and to their chariots; how he
made the water of the Red Sea to overflow them as
they pursued after you, and how the LORD hath de-
5. stroyed them unto this day; and what he did unto
you in the wilderness, until ye came unto this place;
6. and what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons
of Eliab, the son of Reuben; how the earth opened
her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their house-
holds, and their tents, and every living thing that

[1] m. *instruction.* [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. add *and*

the object to **know ye** and the verb governing **your children**, so that we have to supply with the English versions the words, **I speak**. This writer supposes the hearers of Moses to be the first generation of those who took part in the Exodus; see 5:3. Those who have had such an experience of his power should fear him and obey his commands. This theme has been beautifully worked out in Chap. 8.

2. **Chastisement**, that is, discipline, not merely instruction (4:36) nor chastisement, but moral training. Prov. 1: 2–8. The context here emphasizes the severe side of this discipline; the wonderful deeds here mentioned illustrate the fact that Yahweh is "the great God, the mighty, and the terrible," 10:17.

3. For the **signs** and **works**, see 4:34; 6:22; 7:18.

4. Reference to the narrative in Exod. 14.

5. Compare with this the noble statement of God's fatherly goodness and guidance in 1:31; as well as the charge of rebelliousness brought against the people in 9:7 ff.

6. A particular instance of the severe punishment visited upon wilful transgression is here mentioned. The original narrative is found in Num. 16, but it is composite, being made up of JE and

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7. followed them, in the midst of all Israel: but your
eyes have seen all the great work of the LORD which
8. he did. Therefore shall ye keep all the command-
ment which I command thee[1] this day, that ye may
be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye
9. go over to possess it; and that ye may prolong your
days upon the land, which the LORD sware unto your
fathers to give unto them and to their seed, a land
10. flowing with milk and honey. For the land, whither
thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt,
from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy
seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. *you* (pl.).

P; it is noteworthy that Korah, who belongs to the P document, is not mentioned here, another striking evidence of the fact that the historical portions of Deut. are based upon the JE document alone, and show no acquaintance with P. In the ancient time it was considered quite natural that the sinner should involve in his fate all the people and things that belonged to him.

8. Because they themselves have seen such terrible examples of divine wrath against sin, they should be quick to obey the commands of the God-sent teacher, especially in view of the frequent reminder that the way of obedience is the way to present success and abiding prosperity.

10–17. Another motive to obedience is drawn from the fact that Canaan is a land enjoying a great privilege; in this respect, that, unlike Egypt, it is watered by the rain from heaven, a blessing the Lord can give or withhold according to the conduct of his people. Compare the enthusiastic praise of the good land in Chap. 8.

10. In Egypt rain is scarce, the land is dependent for its fruitfulness on the overflowing of the Nile and artificial irrigation; the water must be taken to the land by mechanical means; in Palestine such means were used only in the case of small vegetable gardens, 1 Kgs. 21: 2. **Wateredst it with thy foot.** Referring either to a machine worked by the foot or to the practice of making small ditches trodden by the foot. In the highly favored land given to the chosen people, the God of Israel cares for the watering of the land. As it is beautifully expressed in

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11. herbs: but the land, whither ye go over to possess it,
is a land of hills and valleys, *and* drinketh water of the
12. rain of heaven: a land which the LORD thy God
[1] careth for;[1] the eyes of the LORD thy God are
always upon it, from the beginning of the year even
unto the end of the year.
13. And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken dili-
gently unto my commandments which I command you
this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve
14. him with all your heart and with all your soul, that I[1] Jas. 5:7
will give the rain of your land in its season, the
former rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest
15. gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. And
I[2] will give grass in thy fields for thy cattle, and thou
16. shalt eat and be full. Take heed to yourselves, lest
your heart be deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve

[1] m. Heb. *seeketh after.* [2] Sam. Gr. Vg. *he.*

the two following verses, the land **drinketh water of the rain of heaven.** All through the year the eyes of the God of Israel are upon it in loving, watchful care. It has springs also, but its main supply of water is direct from the heavens.

14. This supply of rain, so needful to the fruitfulness of the land, is not a gift from Baal and does not come in a mechanical way from nature; it is dependent upon the favor of their God, and so must be classed as one of the rewards of obedience. **The former rain.** The rains of autumn which begin in October or November, and grow heavier towards the end of the year and continue through the winter. **The latter rain.** The showers of March and April which refresh the spring crops. On the regularity of the rains of autumn and spring the fruitfulness of the land depends, Jer. 5:24; Joel 2:23; Prov. 16:15.

16. When God has bestowed these natural blessings upon them in great abundance, the result may be forgetfulness showing itself in arrogance and religious laxity, 6:11; 8:12 ff. In that case one form of punishment that may be expected is that the heavens will be **shut up** and the land will suffer from famine, 2 Sam. 21:1 ff.; Jer. 3:3.

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17. other gods, and worship them; and the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and ye perish quickly from off
D[R] 18. the good land which the LORD giveth you. Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul; and ye shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between
19. your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, talking of them, when thou sittest [1]in thine house,[1] and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.
20. And thou shalt write them upon the door post of
21. thine house, and upon thy gates: that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, upon the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of the heavens above the earth.
D 22. For if ye shall diligently keep all this commandment which I command you,[2] to do it; to love the LORD your

[1] Sam. Gr. *in the house*, i.e. *at home*. [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. insert *to-day* (*this day*).

18–21. These verses break the connection, for v. 22 joins on quite well to v. 17; further, except vs. 21, they are a repetition in somewhat different order of the passage found in 6:6–9. This was no doubt a favorite passage in Deuteronomic circles, where the importance of the study and the teaching of the Law was clearly recognized. The exact words of the Law must now be carefully considered and diligently handed down. Such a passage therefore is likely to appear with slight variation in different places.

21. This characteristic promise with its reference to the oath made to the fathers does not appear in the corresponding passage. **As the days of the heavens**, etc., *i.e.* forever. It was not possible to imagine a time when the heavens would not be resting upon the earth; cf. Ps. 89:29.

22. It is a matter of mutual obligation; on the side of the people, loving loyalty, on the side of God, protection and blessing.

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God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him;
23. then will the LORD drive out all these nations from
before you, and ye shall possess nations greater and
24. mightier than yourselves. Every place whereon the
sole of your foot shall tread shall be yours: from the
wilderness, and Lebanon [1] from the [2] river, the river
Euphrates, even unto the hinder [3] sea shall be your
25. border. There shall no man be able to stand before
you: the LORD your God shall lay the fear of you and
the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread
upon, as he hath spoken unto you.
26. Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and
27. a curse; the blessing, if ye shall hearken unto the
28. commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: and the curse, if ye shall not hearken unto the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. add *and*. [2] Sam. Gr. insert *great*. [3] m. *western*.

24–25. The great reward of obedience is the complete possession of this good land. The ideal boundaries of the land are sketched. From the Judean desert in the South to Lebanon in the North, the river Euphrates in the East to the Mediterranean Sea in the West. The Mediterranean is called the "**hinder sea**," 34:2; Zech. 14:8 (RV *Western Sea*), while the Dead Sea is called the "front sea," Ezek. 47:18 (AV and RV *East Sea*).

25. For the phraseology, see 7:24; 2:25, and for the promise, Exod. 23:27. Victory over their enemies is a sure sign of the effective presence of God.

26–28. A brief statement of the dread alternative; on the one side is obedience and blessing, on the other side is apostasy and the curse. This condensed presentation of the case anticipates Chap. 28, where the subject is more fully developed.

28. **Gods which ye have not known.** One of the great thoughts of this book is that the God of Israel has manifested himself in

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29. And it shall come to pass, when the LORD thy God
shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to
possess it, that thou shalt set the blessing upon mount
D[R] 30. Gerizim, and the curse upon mount Ebal. Are they
not beyond Jordan, behind the way of the going down
of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites which dwell
in the Arabah, over against Gilgal, beside the oaks[1]

[1] m. *terebinths;* but Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. read *oak* (sing.).

the nation's history: his deeds of severity and mercy were connected with their own experience, and bore fruit in their national life. To forsake this living God for strange gods with whom they have had no real saving intercourse is the height of folly.

29–32. The command to **set the blessing upon mount Gerizim, and the curse upon mount Ebal**, when they once have entered the land. In what way the blessing and curse are to be set we may see from 27:11 ff.; the present statement may have been inserted here as a reference to that place.

29. These two mountains are in the centre of the country, **Gerizim** and **Ebal**, respectively, being situated on the south and north side of the valley in which Shechem lay (the modern Nablus), one of the most important cities of ancient Palestine, thirty miles north of Jerusalem. To one looking eastward Gerizim would be on the right side, the side of good fortune, and so is chosen for the place of blessing. It has been suggested that further back there may be a belief that at Gerizim the gentler, and at Ebal the sterner, side of the divine nature was manifested. For Shechem as the site of an ancient sanctuary, cf. Gen. 12:6; burial-place of Joshua, Josh. 24:32; scene of national gatherings, Judg. 9; 1 Kgs. 12.

30. This verse is very difficult to explain; it is probably a gloss in whole or part; its statements combine to form a geographical puzzle for which no satisfactory solution has been found. **Are they not?** For the form of the expression with the antiquarian note, cf. 3:11. **The oaks** (or terebinths) **of Moreh** (or *the teacher*) are at Shechem, Gen. 12:6; the **Arabah** and **Gilgal** are at a considerable distance from this place. "The Sunset Road" is not mentioned elsewhere. Without emendation it seems impossible to gain a clear statement. One suggestion is: "beyond Jordan, west of it, in the direction of the sunset, in the land of the Canaanites (who dwell in the Arabah), over against the stone circle, at the oracle-terebinths."

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31. of Moreh? For ye are to pass over Jordan to go in to D
possess the land which the LORD your God giveth
32. you, and ye shall possess it, and dwell therein. And
ye shall observe to do all the statutes and the judge-
ments which I set before you this day.

31. The Law is meant for their guidance in the new land to which they are going. Therefore when they come there, it must be solemnly accepted and carried out in all its extent. Thus a transition is made to the important legal section which follows.

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B. THE DEUTERONOMIC LEGISLATION; CHAPS. 12–26

12:1 ### I. LEGISLATION DEALING MAINLY WITH WORSHIP; 12:1–18:22

12. These are the statutes and the judgements, which ye shall observe to do in the land which the Lord, the God of thy [1] fathers, hath given thee [2] to possess it, all the

[1] Gr. *our*. [2] Gr. *you* (pl.).

In the section 12–26 we have a body of laws which now call for careful examination and brief explanatory notes. This code contains a variety of materials: in some parts the broad outlines of a new national and ecclesiastical constitution are sketched; in others minor details of social life or personal conduct are dealt with. Although some advance had been made in that direction, yet the art of codification was not studied and developed as it is to-day. Hence the arrangement of the laws may seem to us to be somewhat awkward or confused. This may be partly accounted for by later rearrangements and additions and partly by the fact that people of earlier times had a different view of the connections of things from that which we possess. For example, Chaps. 13 and 17:2–7 deal with the same subject; in Chap. 12 there is considerable repetition; compare also 15:21 with 17:1; 17:6 with 19:15; see note on 12:32. Some portions of the section may have existed before the formation of the whole code, and others may have been added later. For the full analysis and the statement of the general relation to other Hebrew codes the Introduction should be consulted.

1. *Laws designed to protect the purity of religious worship;* Chaps. 12–13

Chapter 12 brings before us the law of centralization or the demand that for Israel there shall be only one legitimate sanctuary. This may well be called "The Fundamental Law," as it is the central point in the Deuteronomic programme of reform;

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2. days that ye live upon the earth. Ye shall surely destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess serve their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree:
3. and ye shall break down their altars, and dash in pieces their pillars,[1] and burn their Asherim with fire [2] and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods;[2] and

[1] m. *obelisks.* [2] Gr. *and ye shall hew down their Asherim and ye shall burn the graven images of their Gods with fire.*

it creates a revolution by its drastic treatment of the old sanctuaries, and many of the most important provisions of this code, such as the distinction between sacrifice and profane slaughter, the care for the Levites, the provision of cities of refuge, and the institution of civil courts are made necessary by the demand that Jerusalem alone should be the place of worship and sacrifice. The earlier code, Exod. 20:24 f., provides that simple altars of earth or unhewn stone may be erected in whatever place Yahweh caused his name to be remembered. The practice of the patriarchs recorded in JE is in accordance with this; cf. Gen., Chaps. 12, 13, 22, etc. In the historical books, also, mention is made of many altars, and sacrifice is not confined to one place; 1 Sam. 14:35; 2 Sam. 15; 1 Kgs. 3:4. We know from the preaching of the prophets that the worship at many of these sanctuaries was liable to contamination through heathenish practices and wild excesses. Attempts had, no doubt, been made to regulate them before it was determined to reform them out of existence. (See Introd. on pp. 17, 21.)

1. This verse is a superscription to the whole code. The change from plural to singular is lacking in Gr. and is probably due to a mistake in copying.

2–7. First statement of the Fundamental Law, in plural form. The Canaanite places of worship are to be destroyed and the God of Israel worshipped at only one place.

The Israelites had taken over these sanctuaries which formerly belonged to the original inhabitants; cf. Hos. 4:13. The prophet suggests that they found the shade of the trees pleasant, but these places were chosen at first for a more primitive religious reason, viz., that there was in the trees a special divine presence and that the hill-tops were nearer to heaven. **Green.** Either evergreen, or spreading, luxuriant.

3. On the **pillars** and **Asherim**, see 16:21. All these places,

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4. ye shall destroy their name out of that place. Ye shall
5. not do so unto the LORD your God. But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou[1] shalt come:
6. and thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herd and of your
7. flock: and there ye shall eat before the LORD your God,

[1] Sam. Gr. Tar. Vg. *ye*.

"the high places" of which we read so much in the Old Testament, are to be so completely destroyed that even their very name shall be forgotten. To the Oriental as long as the name lingered the thing had some semblance of reality. Hence they tried to remove, when possible, offensive names from their sacred writings.

4. This verse must evidently be linked to v. 2, and taken to mean, Ye shall not worship Yahweh your God after the manner of these Canaanitish customs.

5. The names of the false gods shall be rooted out, but Yahweh will cause his name to dwell in the place that he will choose; in this one place selected by him his presence will be manifested and his character known; cf. Isa. 18:7. Jerusalem is often designated as the place chosen by the God of Israel; 1 Kgs. 8:44–48.

6. Specifies the offerings which must be brought to this central sanctuary. (1) **Burnt offerings**, which are wholly consumed on the altar and **sacrifices** which are partly eaten by the giver. (2) **Tithes**: see on 14:22 ff. (3) **Heave offering**, what the hand lifts up from the products of the soil, as a first fruit or other offering to God, Num. 15:19. There is no reference to the lifting up of the offering in worship. (4) and (5). **Vows** and **freewill offerings**, special sacrifices given on account of vows or from spontaneous feeling. These might take the form of the sacrifices mentioned in (1). The **firstlings** of oxen and sheep; see on 15:19–23. It has been remarked that this list, which has an air of completeness, contains no reference to the sin-offering and guilt-offering which hold such an important position in the Priestly legislation. It is likely that these acquired their significance at a later time when the ritual was still more highly organized and was dominated much more by the ideas of sin and penitence.

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and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand[1] unto,
and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath
8. blessed thee. Ye shall not do after all the things that
we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his
9. own eyes: for ye are not as yet come to the rest and to
the inheritance, which the LORD your God giveth thee.[2]
10. But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land
which the LORD your God causeth you to inherit, and
he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about,
11. so that ye dwell in safety; then it shall come to pass
that the place which the LORD your God shall choose
to cause his name to dwell there, thither shall ye bring
all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and
your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of
your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. *hands* (pl.). [2] Sam. Gr. Vg. *you* (pl.).

7. Here, while the line is so sharply drawn against Baal-worship and impure customs, the sense of joyful gratitude is still maintained; the worshipper and his family celebrate a glad festival, eating in the presence of their God, and rejoicing in the success of their various enterprises, 16 : 14; 27 : 7.

8–12. Second formulation of the Fundamental Law in plural form.

8. Speaks from the point of view of the wilderness situation, a time when the people are fighting their way into the new home and all their conditions are restless and unsettled. This may serve as an excuse for irregularity and capriciousness in worship, but when their God has caused them to have the land in peaceful and prosperous possession, then this law of centralization shall be strictly enforced. The Priestly Legislation, which is also attributed to Moses, does not show any tendency to allow a lax standard for the earlier days; cf. Amos 5 : 25; Judg. 17 : 6.

9. **To the rest and to the inheritance.** The phrase probably contains a reference to the time of peace under Solomon, after David's successful battles, 2 Sam. 7 : 1; 1 Kgs. 5 : 4; read the plural here, *your* God — *you*, with Gr., Sam, and AV.

11. See v. 6. **Your choice vows.** That which was given

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12. the LORD: and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your
God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and[1]
your menservants, and your maidservants, and the
Levite that is within your gates, forasmuch as he hath
13. no portion nor inheritance with you. Take heed to
thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every
14. place that thou seest: but in the place which the LORD
shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer
thy burnt offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I
command thee.
D^R 15. Notwithstanding thou mayest kill and eat flesh
within all thy gates, after all the desire of thy soul,
according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he
hath given thee: the unclean and the clean may eat
16. thereof, as of the gazelle, and as of the hart. Only

[1] Sam. Gr. Vg. om. *and*.

under some special impulse, as a personal vow, was likely to be of superior quality.

12. Once more the joyful character of the worship is made prominent as well as its family character. Here for the first time provision is made to meet the results of the law of centralization. The Levites who ministered at the local sanctuaries will now, by their abolition, be deprived of their income. In this legislation it is proposed to compensate them in some measure for the loss which they suffer through the reformation; cf. vs. 18–19; 14 : 28 f.; 26 : 12; see on 18 : 1–8.

13–19. A third statement of the Fundamental Law in the singular number.

13. There were a great number of sanctuaries scattered throughout the land, and many of them were chosen because of their attractive natural situation. See v. 2. The **burnt offerings** alone are mentioned here, but all the rest come under the same law.

14. "All that I *am commanding* thee." The precepts regarding sacrifice contained in this chapter.

15–16. Give the permission to slaughter animals for food in a secular fashion, and the prohibition against the eating of blood, thus anticipating the fuller statement in vs. 20 ff.

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ye[1] shall not eat the blood; thou shalt pour it out upon
17. the earth as water. Thou mayest not eat within thy D
gates the tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thine
oil, or the firstlings of thy herd or of thy flock, nor any
of thy vows which thou vowest, nor thy freewill offer-
18. ings, nor the heave offering of thine hand: [2], but thou
shalt eat them before the LORD thy God in the place
which the LORD thy God shall choose, thou, and thy
son, and thy daughter, and [3] thy manservant, and thy
maidservant, and the Levite [4] that is within thy gates:
and thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God in all
19. that thou puttest thine hand unto. Take heed to
thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou
livest upon [5] thy land.
20. When the LORD thy God shall enlarge thy border, as

[1] Sam. *thou* (sing.). [2] Sam. Gr. *hands* (pl.). [3] Sam. Gr. om. *and*. [4] Gr. *stranger* (proselyte). [5] SV *in*.

16. Read, "only *thou* shalt not eat," etc. (Sam.).

17. As stated before (v. 6), the sacrificial meal could only be partaken of at the central sanctuary. It was a joyous festival in which the members of the family celebrated their communion with God and each other by eating part of the sacred gifts.

19. This legislation does not seem to be acquainted with the provision of Levitical cities mentioned in P, Josh. 21: 8 f.

20–25. The permission for profane slaughter. The Hebrews were not in the habit of eating flesh regularly; it was eaten when specially desired, at a festival, or when a visitor was honored. In the early days slaughter and sacrifice meant the same thing; the same word is used for both. The killing of sheep or oxen for food was a sacrificial act. It was easy to perform this act at some local sanctuary or altar. But now when the law is formulated that these sacred acts can be performed only at the central sanctuary, it is necessary to permit profane slaughter, and define and regulate it, as it was obviously impossible to take every animal to be slaughtered at the distant sanctuary. From the law of the central sanctuary there springs then the ordinance regulating the killing of animals in a secular fashion.

20. When the country is enlarged so that the central altar is

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he hath promised thee, and thou shalt say, I will eat flesh, because thy soul desireth to eat flesh; thou mayest
21. eat flesh, after all the desire of thy soul. If the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to put his name there be too far from thee, then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the LORD hath given thee, as I have commanded thee, and thou shalt eat within thy
22. gates, after all the desire of thy soul. Even as the gazelle and as the hart is eaten, so thou shalt eat thereof: the
23. unclean [1] and the clean shall eat thereof alike. Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou shalt not eat the life with the flesh.
24. Thou shalt not eat it; thou shalt pour it out upon
25. the earth as water. Thou shalt not eat it; that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, when thou shalt do that which is right in the eyes
26. of the LORD. Only thy holy things which thou hast,

[1] Sam. Gr. add *in (among) thee.*

not easily accessible, these regulations come into force. Perhaps the second half of the verse is a gloss anticipating v. 21b. **I will eat flesh**, etc., *i.e.* at a feast to entertain a guest or on some other special occasion.

22. See 14: 5. In ancient Israel the only meat not eaten sacrificially was game; any one not ceremonially clean could eat of such meat, seeing that it had no sacrificial character. Now the eating of sheep and oxen, that were used in sacrifice, is placed on the same level.

23–25. But the prohibition against eating the blood is exceedingly stringent. This is evidently quite ancient, 1 Sam. 14: 32. It rests upon the belief that the soul or life is situated in the blood. The blood must go back to the mother earth who gave it. In later times the reason for this abstinence was the part played by the blood in the atoning sacrifice; cf. Lev. 17: 11. Such passages as Ezek. 33: 25; Lev. 19: 26 suggest that the eating of blood was associated with the heathenish superstitions. See also Acts 15: 20.

26. Observing carefully the prohibition just given, the Israelites may slaughter and eat animals at their family festivals, but the

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and thy vows, thou shalt take, and go unto the place
27. which the LORD shall choose: and thou shalt offer thy
burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar
of the LORD thy God: and the blood of thy sacrifices
shall be poured out upon the altar of the LORD thy
28. God, and thou shalt eat the flesh. Observe and hear [1]
all these words which I command thee,[2] that it may go
well with thee, and with thy children after thee for
ever, when thou doest that which is good and right in
the eyes of the LORD thy God.
29. When the LORD thy God shall cut off the nations
from before thee, whither thou goest in to possess
them, and thou possessest them, and dwellest in their
30. land; take heed to thyself that thou be not ensnared
[3] to follow them,[3] after that they be destroyed from be-
fore thee; and that thou inquire not after their gods,
saying, How do these nations serve their gods? [4] even
31. so will I do likewise.[4] Thou shalt not do so unto the

[1] Sam. Gr. add *and do.* [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. add *to-day* (*this day*). [3] m. Heb. *after them.* [4] m. *that I also may do likewise.*

actual sacrificial offerings must be taken to the one divinely selected sanctuary.

27. This verse gives clearly the distinction between **burnt offerings** and **sacrifices**; in the former case the whole offering, flesh and blood, is consumed upon the altar; in the latter the blood alone is poured upon the altar, and the flesh is eaten by the worshippers.

28. The regular Deuteronomic promise is appended also to the observance of these important ordinances, v. 25; 6: 13.

29–32. Strong warnings against the danger of being enticed into heathenish modes of worship. Introduction to the remainder of this section.

29. See 19: 1. Such statements evidently reflect in a conditional form the actual historical situation of the writer's time.

30. This temptation was present during many centuries and constituted the chief danger against which the simplicity and purity of Hebrew religion had to contend; its strength lay in the

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LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters do they burn in the fire to their gods.

Rev. 22 : 8 f. 32. What thing soever I command you,[1] that shall ye[2] observe to do: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.

Matt. 24 : 24; Mk. 13 : 22 13. If there arise in the midst of thee a prophet, or a

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. read *thee* and Sam. Gr. add *to-day*. [2] Gr. Syr. Vg. *thou*.

fact that the ancient peoples looked upon each country as distinct and as having its own proper god and peculiar religious customs, which must not be lightly set aside; cf. Ezek. 20 : 32; 2 Kgs. 17 : 26.

31. See also 18 : 10. An important statement from the point of view of the history of religion. Recent excavations have illustrated the fact that the ancient inhabitants of Canaan practised human sacrifice, and especially the sacrifice of children. The Hebrews believed that in a special sense the first-born child belonged to Yahweh. It is probable that Gen. 22 is a protest against this. In times of great national danger there was a tendency to revert to this extreme form of sacrifice to secure the help of Yahweh or other gods, 2 Kgs. 16 : 3; Mic. 6 : 7; Jer. 7 : 31; Ezek. 16 : 21. Here the practice is distinctly denounced as inconsistent with pure religion and hateful to Yahweh. See Lev. 18 : 21; 20 : 2 f.

32. In the Hebrew text this verse forms the beginning of the next chapter, and in that case must be regarded as a superscription to the following commands. But it should be noted that the passage now found in 16 : 21–17 : 7, breaks the connection where it stands, and would suit exceedingly well in this place, where we expect an enumeration of forbidden practices. The present verse is of a kind that was easily supplied by scribes; cf. 4 : 2.

Chap. 13 : 1–6. Warning against enticement by a false prophet. This also is an important passage; in judging what may be called its " noble intolerance " it is well to remember the slow, stern battle against superstition and the immense toil by which the great fabric of religious truth has been built up. We should be constantly looking for new light, but we cannot always be starting from the beginning. This great truth that there is one supreme God and that idolatry is degrading, a truth revealed to the great prophets, must be preserved at all costs. It is too great

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dreamer of dreams, and he give thee a sign or a wonder,
2. and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he
spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods,
which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;
3. thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet,
or unto that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your
God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD
your God with all your heart and with all your soul.
4. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him,
and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and
5. ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that
prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to

to be sacrificed at the shrine of some adventurous enthusiast. In the East the people have often been misled by fanatical dreamers who boasted of new revelations. The test of the new revelation is that it must not contradict the central truth so strongly set forth by the great prophets of the past. Here we note the growth of an objective standard, an important step in human progress, but one that has its dangers, as it may sometimes be used to crush noble originality as well as base superstition.

1. The **prophet** and **dreamer of dreams** are here placed side by side, as it was recognized that dreams might be a means of real revelation, Num. 12:6; Joel 2:28. But in Jer. 23 we have a vigorous polemic against the "lying dreams" of the false prophets.

2. **The sign or the wonder** (portent). Note that in Isa. 7 we have a case of a sign proffered by a genuine prophet. According to the thought of that time, the prediction might come to pass without any trickery, in our sense of the word, as inferior gods or demons were still regarded as having some power; cf. 18:21 f.; Matt. 24:24; Rev. 13:13.

3. The real temptation was in the fact that something startling might happen to bewilder the senses or deceive the mind, and Yahweh permitted this to test the genuineness of their faith and loyalty; cf. 6:5, "Whether ye *actually* love," etc.

4. A fundamental thought of this book; cf. 6:13; 8:2, 16; 10:12, 20.

5. Because he has advocated rebellion or apostasy and endeavored to lead the people to show ingratitude to the God of Israel, the stern penalty of death must be inflicted upon the prophet.

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death; because he hath spoken rebellion[1] against the LORD your[2] God, which brought you[3] out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of bondage, to draw thee aside out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee.

6. If thy brother,[4] the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast
7. not known, thou, nor thy fathers; of the gods of the peoples which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even
8. unto the other end of the earth; thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine

[1] m. Heb. *turning aside.* [2] Sam. Gr. *thy.* [3] Sam. Gr. *thee.* [4] Sam. Gr. insert *the son of thy father or.*

The community is regarded as having a sacred character, and for its preservation the extermination of all known evil is demanded. Here we are far from the intelligent toleration that wars against vice but strives to preserve freedom of research and liberty of opinion. We cannot expect it at this stage; here we have one great contribution; truth is of supreme importance and worth fighting for.

6–11. The temptation to idolatry is to be sternly rejected, though it come from one's nearest relative or most trusted friend.

6. Read with Gr. and Sam., "the son of thy father or the son of thy mother." It is stated as strongly as possible that neither blood-relationship, which is placed first, nor love and friendship must come into consideration where it is a question of faithfulness to the true God. Does the omission of the father and mother mean that they are fixed in the faith and that it would be folly to suggest any possible failure on their part?

7. Written at a time when Israel was brought into contact with distant peoples and was threatened with the invasion of religious customs from Syria and Assyria, 2 Kgs. 16:10; 21:3.

8. Reflects the intense conviction and the fierce zeal of the reformers contending against the dangers of idolatry. "Thou shalt

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eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt
9. thou conceal him: but thou shalt surely kill him;
thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death,
10. and afterwards the hand of all the people. And thou
shalt stone him with stones, that he die; because he
hath sought to draw thee away from the LORD thy
God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out
11. of the house of bondage. And all Israel shall hear, and
fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this
is in the midst of thee.
12. If thou shalt hear tell concerning [1] one of thy cities,
which the LORD thy God giveth thee to dwell there,
13. saying, Certain [2]base fellows [2] are gone out from the
midst of thee, and have drawn away the inhabitants of
their city, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which

[1] m. *in*. [2] m. Heb. *sons of worthlessness*.

not cast a covering over his secret wickedness." It is not simply open idolatry that is to be pursued with such inflexible severity.

9. Of course, some kind of judicial procedure is implied, but not made prominent here. See 17:5 f. **But thou shalt surely kill him**; for this Gr. has "Thou shalt surely report concerning him."

10. The offender is not only killed by stoning, but it is also intended that the body should be buried under a heap of heavy stones, so that the spirit may be confined and kept from causing trouble to the living.

11. It is expected that swift, stern punishment will strike terror into the hearts of the people and cause them to respect the Law, 17:13; 19:20.

12–18. A city that is led into idolatry shall be completely destroyed.

13. In this city certain of its members have gone out publicly and advocated the service of strange gods, gods that have had no living relationship with the nation. These men are called **base fellows**; this phrase is in the AV translated by sons or "children of Belial," an incorrect rendering, as the word *Belial* is not a proper name; it occurs in the Pentateuch only here and 15:9, though frequently elsewhere in the Old Testament. Compare 2 Cor. 6:15.

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14. ye have not known; then shalt thou inquire, and make
search, and ask diligently; and, behold, if it be truth,
and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought
15. in the midst of thee; thou shalt surely smite the in-
habitants of that city with the edge of the sword,
[1]destroying it utterly,[1] and all that is therein [2]and
16. the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword.[2] And
thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the
street thereof, and shalt burn with fire the city, and
all the spoil thereof every whit,[3] unto the LORD thy
God: and it shall be an heap[4] for ever; it shall not be
17. built again. And there shall cleave nought of the
devoted thing to thine hand: that the LORD may turn
from the fierceness of his anger, and shew thee mercy,
and have compassion upon thee, and multiply thee,
18. as he hath sworn unto thy fathers; when thou shalt

[1] m. Heb. *devoting it.* [2] Gr. om. [3] m. *as a whole burnt offering.* [4] m. *mound*, Heb. *tel.*

14. Perhaps added here from 17 : 4.

15. The city is to be treated as if it were an enemy's city taken in war; it has to be devoted, or placed under the ban; see 7 : 2. The "devotion" here demanded is of the severest kind, involving the destruction of the inhabitants and all their possessions. Cf. Josh. 6 and 7; 1 Sam. 15 : 3. **And the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword** — lacking in Gr., probably a scribal addition.

16. The city is to be treated as a plague spot; the life of individuals and the preciousness of things are to be disregarded; all are infected with the dread disease and must be ruthlessly cut off from the life of the nation. **Every whit.** The original word is an old term for "burnt-offering," an offering which was given completely to Yahweh. It is a sacred execution; all the spoil is gathered in the broad, open place to be burned; all that is left of the city is a heap of stones, a memorial of its wickedness and a warning to others.

17. By the thoroughgoing nature of this punishment the anger of Yahweh may be appeased; if loss has been suffered on account of this holy zeal, the renewal of blessing will bring compensation.

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hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep all his commandments which I command thee this day, to do that which is right [1] in the eyes of the LORD thy God.

14. Ye are the children of the LORD your God: ye shall Tit. 2:14
not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between
2. your eyes for the dead. For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD [2] hath chosen thee to be [3] a peculiar people unto himself, above [4] all peoples that are upon the face of the earth.

3, 4. Thou [5] shalt not eat any abominable thing. These

[1] Sam. Gr. add *and good.* [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. Tar. add *thy God.* [3] SV *a people for his own possession.* [4] m. *out of.* [5] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. *ye* (pl.).

2. *Ordinances for the Preservation of Ceremonial Purity;* 14:1–21

14:1–2. Prohibition of heathen mourning customs. This short passage is probably of later origin than the kernel of the book. Note the individualistic tone of the phrase **Ye are children of Yahweh your God**; and the following points: (1) There is no reference to this subject in JE; the parallel is found in Lev. 19:27–28 (H); 21:5 (H). (2) These customs are mentioned, without blame, in Jer. 16:6; 41:5; Ezek. 7:18; passages which belong to a time later than the original Deut. (3) In their earliest forms these customs may have been connected with the worship of the dead or of spirits that were supposed to dwell in particular localities. At the time this passage was written the writer may not have been fully conscious of that fact, but he saw clearly that the associations of such things were with the superstitions of surrounding tribes rather than with the nobler elements of the Hebrew religion. A man can belong to one religious circle only; he who is consecrated to Yahweh must come out from the sphere of another god.

1. Compare Exod. 4:22 f. (JE); Hos. 11:1; Isa. 1:2–4, where the sonship is national. The priests of Baal cut themselves to make a favorable impression on their god, 1 Kgs. 18:28. For **baldness** as a sign of mourning, see Amos 8:10; Isa. 3:24.

2. Repeated from 7:6; the special relation of the nation to Yahweh demands complete consecration. The Israelites must not defile themselves by eating forbidden food.

3–20. There are no regulations of this kind in JE; the parallel is found in Lev. 11.

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are the beasts which ye shall eat: the ox,[1] the sheep,
5. and the goat, the hart, and the gazelle, and the roe-
buck, and the wild goat, and the pygarg, and the ante-
6. lope, and the chamois. And every beast that parteth
the hoof, and hath the hoof cloven in two, *and*[2] cheweth[3]
7. the cud, among the beasts, that ye shall eat. Never-
theless these ye shall not eat of them that chew the
cud, or of them that have the hoof cloven: the camel,
and the hare, and the coney, because they chew the
cud but part not the hoof, they are unclean unto you:
8. and the swine, because he parteth the hoof[4] but
cheweth not the cud, he is unclean unto you: of
their flesh ye shall not eat, and their carcases ye shall
not touch.
9. [5] These ye shall eat of all that are in the waters:
10. whatsoever hath fins and scales shall ye eat: and

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. add *and*. [2] Gr. Syr. Vg. read *and*, not in Heb. [3] m. Heb. *bringeth up*. [4] Sam. Gr. add *and is cloven footed* (so Lev. 11:7). [5] Sam. Gr. add *and*.

3–8. Land animals divided into clean and unclean. There is nothing in Lev. corresponding to vs. 4b–5; there the clean animals are merely defined, here they are illustrated as well; among clean animals, **the ox, the sheep, and the goat** are most common; **the hart and the gazelle** are named as specimens of game, 12:15–22; 15:22. **The roebuck** also is mentioned in the same class, 1 Kgs. 4:23; the other names occur only here.

5. **Pygarg.** This name is simply transliterated from the Greek, probably the addax, a species of antelope. **Chamois,** "mountain-sheep," seems more suitable.

6. Ruminating animals which part the hoof may be eaten except those named in the following verse.

7. **The coney.** The old English word for rabbit is not unsuitable, as the animal meant was in many respects like a rabbit. "Rock-badger" is the name adopted, from the German, by scholars.

9–10. Water animals. Lev. 11:9–12 has the same in a more diffuse form.

10. Such fish, *e.g.* eels, resembled the serpent tribe.

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whatsoever hath not fins and scales ye shall not eat;
it is unclean unto you.
11, 12. Of all clean birds ye may eat. But these are they
of which ye shall not eat: the eagle, and the gier
13. eagle, and the ospray; [1] and the glede,[1] and the falcon,
14. and the kite after its kind; and every raven after
15. its kind; and the ostrich, and the night hawk, and
16. the seamew, and the hawk after its kind; the little owl,
17. and the great owl, and the horned owl; and the
18. pelican, and the vulture, and the cormorant; and
the stork, and the heron after its kind, and the hoopoe,
19. and the bat. And all winged creeping things are
20. unclean unto you: [2] they shall not be eaten.[2] Of
all clean fowls ye may eat.

[1] Sam. Gr. om. (so Lev. 11 : 14). [2] Sam. Gr. *ye shall not eat of them.*

11–20. Of birds clean and unclean.

11. This verse is not found in the parallel passage.

12. "The griffon-vulture and the bearded-vulture and the osprey." The first of these three is referred to elsewhere in the O. T., Mic. 1 : 16; Isa. 40 : 31; Job 39 : 27.

13. Read as in Lev. 11 : 14, simply, "the kite and the falcon"; the word translated **glede** seems to have come in through a repetition of similar forms.

17. **Vulture**, *i.e.* the carrion vulture.

19. Winged creeping things; the phrase means creatures that appear in swarms and have the power of flying.

20. **Fowls** here may mean the winged insects of the previous verses, in that case it may be an abridgment of the fuller statement in Lev. 11 : 21–22.

It is probable that this whole passage is based upon the similar list in Lev. 11, and so does not belong to the original strata of Deut. It deals with a subject that has played a great part in the history of religious ceremonial. The distinction between clean and unclean animals was ancient in Israel and was not confined to that nation. Cf. Gen. 7 : 2, 8; 8 : 20 (J). It is not possible to discern any clear scientific principle of division. At this stage Hebrew scholars were working upon material which had already to some extent lost its primitive significance. The sani-

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21. Ye shall not eat of any thing that dieth of itself: thou mayest give it unto the stranger that is within thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto a foreigner: for thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe[1] a kid in its mother's milk.

[1] SV *boil.*

tary or dietetic reasons may have come into play in particular instances and later details, as well as feelings of natural repulsion towards certain creatures, but when all allowances of that kind are made it seems safest to assume that the primitive reasons were of a religious character, showing the influence of animistic and totemistic conceptions. It is in this direction that we must look for the main origin of these *taboos*. It can be proved that all the animals mentioned have at some time been the objects of religious veneration. The serpent, for example, was looked upon as in a special sense a demonic animal, and with superstitious people fear of such a creature often passed into worship. The totem animal was not eaten by its own tribe except on sacramental occasions. That which was a sacramental animal to one tribe was unclean to another. While the Hebrew legislator might not be acquainted with the origin of all these ideas, it was clear to him that things associated with heathen rites must be kept outside the circle of Hebrew worship, Isa. 66 : 3; Ezek. 8 : 10 f.

21. **That which dieth of itself** may not be eaten by the Israelite, the main reason being that the carcase had not been properly bled. In Lev. 17 : 15 f. this command follows the prohibition against eating blood. In Exod. 22 : 31 flesh that has been *torn of beasts* shall not be eaten; it shall be cast to the dogs. Here that which **dieth of itself** shall not be eaten; it may be given to the sojourner or sold to the foreigner. In Lev. 17 : 15 f. (P) neither the Israelite nor the sojourner can eat these forms of flesh. The law in Deut. evidently belongs to an earlier age than that of P; the sojourner is treated kindly and has certain religious rights and duties, 29 : 11; 5 : 14; but he is not yet, as in P, brought into such close relation to the Hebrew worship; in other words, he is not treated as a proselyte.

The last half of this verse seems to be out of place here; it is taken from Exod. 23 : 19; 34 : 26. This prohibition does not rest upon sentiment or a sense of unnaturalness; it is directed against some superstitious custom among the shepherds, a special

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22. Thou shalt surely tithe all the increase of thy seed,
that which cometh forth of the field year by year.
23. And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the
place which he[1] shall choose to cause his name to
dwell there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of
thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herd and of thy
flock; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy
24. God always. And if the way be too long for thee,
so that thou art not able to carry it, because the place

[1] Sam. Gr. reads *Yahweh thy God*, as subject.

virtue was ascribed to such milk, it was used to increase the fruitfulness of gardens and trees and also in mystic rites.

(3) *The Law of Tithes;* 14:22–29

22–29. The fundamental law of Chap. 12 transposes the offering of tithes from the local sanctuaries to Jerusalem and here we have more detailed provisions for the carrying out of that law. The tithe as a form of taxation was known among Babylonians, Egyptians, and other ancient nations; it is mentioned as a royal tax in 1 Sam. 8:15. Though it is not mentioned in the oldest Hebrew codes, the sacred tithe was no doubt in use in early times; cf. Gen. 28:22; Amos 4:4. Deut. places on the basis of definite law that which had already existed as popular custom. With this should be compared the following passages, 26:12–15; Num. 18:21–28 (P); Lev. 27:32 f. (P^S). In the Priestly Code the tithe is given to the Levites for their support, while they in turn give a tithe of this to the priests; in the later passage, Lev. 27, a tithe of cattle is included.

22. **The increase of thy seed.** This phrase, as we see from the following verse, is not to be taken too literally.

23. **The firstlings**, etc., perhaps transposed from 12:17. For the law with regard to these see 15:19. It had been customary to hold such religious festivals at the various sanctuaries, the new point is that they must now be held at Jerusalem. By celebrating the feast at the one sanctuary of Israel's one God he is acknowledged as the giver of all these good things.

24–26. As the law of centralization caused the regulations as to sacrifice to be modified on account of the distance of the legitimate sanctuary, Chap. 12, so is it here with the law of tithes. If the

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is too far from thee, which the LORD thy God shall choose to set his name there, when the LORD thy God
25. shall bless thee: then shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose:
26. and thou shalt bestow the money for whatsoever thy soul desireth, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul asketh of thee: and thou shalt eat there before the LORD thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou and thine household:
27. and the Levite that is within thy gates, [1]thou shalt not forsake him;[1] for he hath no portion nor inheritance with thee.
28. At the end of every three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase in the same year,
29. and shalt lay it up within thy gates: and the Levite, because he hath no portion nor inheritance with thee, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow,

[1] Gr. om.

offerer lives at a great distance from the sanctuary, he may turn the tithe into money, for convenience of carrying it on his pilgrimage, and at his journey's end purchase what he desires for the sacrificial feast. Thus a great change is introduced; the sacrificial feast must be at Jerusalem, the feasts at home become secular. **Wine** and **strong drink** are frankly mentioned as elements of joyfulness; cf. 1 Sam. 1:13.

27. The Levite who loses by the change of custom must be the object of generous care at these festivals. The legislator is evidently not acquainted with the rich provision made in the Priestly Code, Num. 18:21; Lev. 27:32.

28–29. These verses show the philanthropic spirit of Deut.; in the third year the tithe must be deposited at some place near the offerer's home and applied for the benefit of the Levite and the needy. This was called in later times "the tithe of the poor." This book, quite in the prophetic spirit, takes these helpless classes under its care. See 16:11–14; 24:17 f.; 26:12–13.

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which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand[1] which thou doest.

15. At the end of every seven years thou shalt make
2. a release. And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release that which he hath lent unto his neighbour; he shall not exact it of his neighbour and his brother; because the LORD's release hath been proclaimed.
3. Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it: but whatsoever of thine is with thy brother thine hand shall release.[2]

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. *hands.* [2] m. *release: save when there,* etc.

The relationship of the triennial tithe or "tithe of the poor" to the regular tithe is not quite clear; some regard it as an additional tithe, but it is more probable that it is intended to set apart the whole of the regular tithe in the third year for the support of the Levites and the poor. The intention of the legislation is benevolent and has had a kindly influence on later times.

4. *Laws concerning the Remission of Debts and the Release of Slaves;* 15:1–18

This chapter continues the consideration of the case of the poor. Every third year there is special provision for them from the tithe, and the seventh year also brings for them certain advantages.

1–11. The remission of debts.

1. **A release.** A verb derived from the same root is used in Exod. 23:11, of letting the land rest. This takes place at the end of a period of seven years, or in the seventh year.

2. "The creditor shall *renounce* that which he has lent." There is difference of opinion on an important point; the ancient interpreters generally take the law to mean that an actual remission of the loan was intended, while the moderns think that it is merely the suspension for one year of the right to claim the debt. **Yahweh's release.** The economic laws are regarded as quite religious in their nature.

3. **A foreigner.** A mere temporary visitor who is not bound to Israel by any religious or social ties cannot claim the advantages of this law.

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D[R] 4. Howbeit there shall be no poor with thee; (for the LORD[1] will surely bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to
5. possess it;) if only thou diligently hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all this
6. commandment which I command thee this day. For the LORD thy God will bless thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt rule over many nations, but they shall not rule over thee.

D 7. If there be with thee a poor man, one of thy brethren, within any of thy gates in thy[2] land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:
8. but thou shalt surely open thine hand unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need *in that*
9. which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a base thought in thine heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. add *thy God*. [2] Sam. Gr. *the*.

4. **Howbeit there shall be no poor.** This is the closest rendering of the original. Other translations such as "To the end that there be no poor among you," or "Howbeit there *should* be no poor," are influenced by the fact that these verses 4–6 stand in apparent contradiction to the context and in fact to the whole spirit of Deut. with its constantly recurring exhortations to care for the poor. As it reflects the economic conditions of a later time when the Jews were gaining an international position as a trading people, it may be that the whole passage is a gracious promise put into Deuteronomic form by a later writer. It reflects the faith that if men lived rightly and followed the laws of their God there would be no poor.

7. Connects very well with vs. 3. The brother is to be treated generously and the nearness of the year of remission must be not made a pretext for hardening the heart against him.

9. Shows a keen knowledge of human nature and presents

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against thy poor brother, and thou give him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin
10. unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and [1] thine heart shall not be grieved [1] when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy work, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For the poor shall never
11. cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt surely open thine hand unto thy brother, to thy needy, and to thy poor, in thy land.
12. If thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew

[1] Sam. Gr. *thou shalt not grieve in thy heart.*

strongly the appeal of *the brother* to the nation's God against greed and meanness.

10. The favor loses its value unless done cheerfully, in the spirit of generosity and faith, cf. Rom. 12 : 8; 2 Cor. 9 : 7.

11. The reason for such legislation is that **the poor shall never cease out of the land.** Compare this with the statement in v. 4. This law embodies the Deuteronomic ideal of Israelitish brotherhood; a spirit of mutual helpfulness should pervade the life of a nation that is bound together by such noble memories and by faith in one living God. Such laws could never be carried out with unchanging rigor; the important thing is to preserve the spirit of righteousness and benevolence in our social life. The reading of Neh. 5 will suffice to show how difficult it was to translate such ideas into actual practice, there was hindrance through human selfishness as well as social conditions. In the early days of the Hebrew people life was simple and loans were small, asked for only in cases of great need. In later times, when the Jews had to do with large commercial transactions, while paying respect to the letter, they had various legal ways of avoiding that exact obedience which would have rendered many forms of business impossible.

12–18. Law regulating the release of the slave. This is connected with the contents of the previous verse by the fact that the Hebrew man or woman came into slavery through debt. This law is found in Exod. 21 : 2–6 (JE); here we have the preaching element peculiar to Deut. and certain variations noted below. We read of one attempt to carry out this law, Jer. 34 : 8 ff. There is a law in Lev. 25 : 39 ff. (P) which shows a more ad-

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woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.

13. And when thou lettest him go free from thee, thou
14. shalt not let him go empty: thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy threshing-floor, and out of thy winepress: as[1] the LORD thy
15. God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to-day.
16. And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go out

[1] So read Sam. Gr.; Heb. and AV read *of that wherewith.*

vanced state of feeling; it is beginning to be felt that there is in the relation of master and slave something inconsistent with the brotherhood of Israelites as this rests upon a religious basis. In judging the slavery of the olden times we must remember that the thought of the separateness and dignity of the individual personality was not yet made prominent; further that slavery was an essential part of early Semitic society; that for the poor and unprotected it was a condition of comparative comfort and security; while there were cases of harshness and cruelty, there were others of friendliness and mutual helpfulness.

12. This law refers to Hebrew slaves only. If the phrase " or the Hebrewess " belongs to the original form of this verse, it makes a real difference from Exod. 21 : 7, and places the woman in the same position as the man. In the interval the absolute power of the father over the daughter may have been lessened. There may be some significance in the fact that in the corresponding verse in Exod. the word *buy* is used while here it is *selleth himself* or *be sold.*

13–14. The question of a man's wife and family is passed over here, cf. Exod. 21 : 3–4, and instead we have the demand for generous treatment of the departing slave.

14. **Thou shalt furnish him liberally.** The original here is a striking phrase, " Thou shalt give him a necklace or a birthday present."

15. The application of history to present duty, so characteristic of this book, cf. 6 : 16; 16 : 12; 24 : 18, 22.

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from thee; because he loveth thee and thine house,
17. because he is well with thee; then thou shalt take an awl, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant[1] for ever. And also unto
18. thy maidservant[2] thou shalt do likewise. It shall not seem hard unto thee,[3] when thou lettest him go free from thee; for to the double of the hire of an hireling hath he served thee six years: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest.
19. All the firstling males that are born of thy herd and of thy flock thou shalt sanctify unto the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thine ox,

[1] m. *bondman.* [2] m. *bondwoman.* [3] Heb. *in thine eye;* Sam. Gr. Vg. *in thine eyes* (pl.).

16. It might be better to stay where he was provided for, than to face the world alone. There might be other ties as well as loyalty to the master, cf. Exod. 21 : 5.

17. In Exod. the ceremony by which the slave is bound to perpetual servitude has a sacred character, whether it took place at a public sanctuary or before a private shrine. "Then his master shall bring him unto God." In Deut., of course, the ceremony loses its sacred character.

18. If there are noble motives urging to this course, it is also true that on a mere business basis the master owes something to the slave; the same work from a hired servant would have cost double the price.

5. *Law concerning the First-born of Animals;* 15 : 19–23

19–23. In 12 : 17 we have a reference to firstlings which is more fully developed here, just as in 14 : 22 ff. the matter of tithes is elaborated. This is a brief general statement, the writer's chief concern being that the firstlings which were fit for sacrifice should be presented at the central sanctuary. It reproduces the earlier ordinances, Exod. 34 : 19; 13 : 11–16; 22 : 29 (JE); except that here there is no mention of "the first-born of man." In the later Priestly Law the presentation of the firstlings is no longer a sacrificial meal; it has become a tax paid to the priests.

19. Here we see the force of **sanctify**; it is recognized that

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20. nor shear the firstling of thy flock. Thou shalt eat it
before the LORD thy God year by year in the place
which the LORD shall choose, thou and thy household.
21. And if it have any blemish, *as if it be* lame or blind,
any ill blemish whatsoever, thou shalt not sacrifice it
22. unto the LORD thy God. Thou shalt eat it within
thy gates: the unclean and the clean *shall eat it* alike,
23. as the gazelle, and as the hart. Only thou shalt not eat
the blood thereof; thou shalt pour it out upon the ground
as water.

D **16.** Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover

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these animals belong so entirely to Yahweh that the owner has no property in them.

20. They are to be eaten in a sacrificial meal at the central sanctuary. **Year by year.** According to the earlier law the presentation was made eight days after birth, as at that time altars were near at hand, but with one central sanctuary they must be reserved for the annual pilgrimage.

21. For the general rule see 17 : 1. That which is not up to the standard of sacrificial perfection, but yet fit for food, may be eaten at home, if the regulation laid down in 12 : 22–23 is carefully observed.

6. *The Three Annual Festivals;* 16 : 1–17

Among the Hebrews, in early days, festivals were held on new moons and sabbaths, for worship and joyful intercourse, 1 Sam. 20 : 5; Amos 8 : 5; Isa. 1 : 14. There were also other feasts of a social and partly religious character, 2 Sam. 13 : 23. But three great festivals stand out prominently in the oldest documents; "Three times in the year shall all thy males appear before Yahweh thy God," Exod. 34 : 23 (J). These festivals appear in all the codes; the peculiar Deuteronomic contribution is the insistence on the command that they shall be observed at the central sanctuary. They passed gradually through three stages: at first they were connected with the pastoral or agricultural life of the people, then they received a noble historical interpretation, and finally they become fixed church festivals with more solemn associations and with a more definite theological application. In accordance with the general character of the book, it is in Deut. where the historical interpretation appears with greatest fulness and clearness.

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unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by
2. night. And thou shalt sacrifice the passover unto the Lord thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which the LORD[1] shall choose to cause his name to
3. dwell there. Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread there-

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. add *thy God*.

1–8. The feast of the Passover (and of unleavened Bread).

1. **Abib**, the month of *green ears*, the pre-Exilic name for the month (March–April) which was afterward called Nisan. Exod. 13:4; 23:15 (JE); in P, "the first month." **Passover.** This is the name of an ancient religious observance whose origin and primitive form are unknown. The earliest references assume its existence and give it a connection with the Exodus, Exod. 12:1 ff.; 10:9. It may have originated in an ancient custom of sprinkling the tent-poles with blood as an appeal to the deity for mercy and protection in times of plague, and was then associated with the spring festival, when a lamb was slain in sacrifice and eaten with joyful worship. It is impossible to harmonize all the detailed statements in the different documents; they represent changing customs and ideas belonging to different periods.

2. In P, Exod. 12:3–6, the paschal sacrifice is limited to a *lamb;* from this statement it appears that the offering might, in the time when Deuteronomy was written, be either a bullock or a sheep, probably the first-born of these animals, 15:19.

3. Here we have connected with the Passover another custom or observance which was no doubt originally separate, the feast of unleavened bread. The two are here combined either by the Deuteronomic or a later editor; the result is not quite clear; vs. 3 and 4 seem to break the connection while it is difficult to harmonize vs. 7 and 8. In the other codes the feast of unleavened bread is kept distinct, though placed in the same month and associated with the Exodus, Exod. 12:21–27; 13:3–10; 23:15–18; 34:25 (JE); Exod. 12:1–13, 43–49; Lev. 23:9–14; Num. 9:1–14; 28:16 (P and H). This feast in its earliest form was agricultural, it was the first of the three great harvest festivals. The bread made in haste in the first week of harvest was unleavened; cf. Gen. 18:6; 19:3; Josh. 5:11. Cakes of this along with the first sheaf of grain may have been presented to God, Lev.

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with, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.

4. And there shall be no leaven seen with thee in all thy borders seven days; neither shall any of the flesh, which thou sacrificest the first day at even,
5. remain all night until the morning. Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which
6. the LORD thy God giveth thee: but at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to cause his name to dwell in, there thou shall sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the
7. season that thou camest forth out of Egypt. And thou shalt roast[1] and eat it in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in
8. the morning, and go unto thy tents. Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread: and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly to the LORD thy God; thou shalt do no[2] work *therein*.

[1] m. *seethe*. [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. add *any*, i.e. *thou shalt not do any work*.

Lev. 23:10. Later, thoughts connected with the deliverance from Egypt were added to it. The Baal worship attached great importance to feasts associated with the soil, and it was natural that Deut. while claiming these gifts for Yahweh should lay emphasis upon the manifestations of God in history. Thus the phrases **bread of affliction** and **in haste** (better, *with trepidation*) refer to the Egyptian oppression.

4. The command to confine the celebration to the evening may be a survival from an original lunar festival.

5. The passover now loses its local character, but retains some of its features as a social festival in the presence of Israel's God. For a somewhat different statement see Ezek. 45:21 ff.

7. **Roast**, lit. "*boil*"; in Exod. 12:9 (P) it is commanded *not* to boil it; boiling seems to have been the earlier usage; cf. 1 Sam. 2:13–15. **Go unto thy tents**, *i.e.* go home, a phrase which

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9. Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: from
the time thou beginnest to put the sickle to the stand-
ing corn [1] shalt thou begin to number seven weeks.
10. And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the
LORD thy God with [2] a tribute of a freewill offering of
thine hand, which thou shalt give, according as the
11. LORD thy God blesseth [3] thee: and thou shalt rejoice
before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy
daughter, and [4] thy manservant, and thy maidservant,
and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the

[1] SV *grain.* [2] m. *after the measure of the.* [3] Sam. Gr. *hath blessed* (so AV). [4] Sam. Gr. om. *and.*

continued in use after the Israelites had passed the tent stage. In JE, Exod. 13:6, the seventh day is called a pilgrimage, or a festal gathering of pilgrims, here it is a gathering or assembly; in P, Exod. 12:16, it is a holy convocation.

The origin and manner of the connection of these two observances may be obscure, but the fact is that they have been associated together during many centuries. For Christians the Passover finds its continuation and completion in the Easter festival.

9–12. The Feast of Weeks, cf. Exod. 23:16; 34:22 (JE); Lev. 23: 15–22 (H); Num. 28:26–31 (P). In JE it is called the "Feast of Harvest" and in P the "Day of the First-fruits." In the earlier codes the day is left undetermined. Here there is a certain indefiniteness as to the starting-point, for the numbering of the seven weeks (fifty days, Pentecost) is not the Passover, but the beginning of harvest, which itself would be subject to variation. Lev. 23:15, 16 mentions a particular day from which the reckoning is to begin.

9. "From the beginning of the sickle in the standing grain shalt thou begin to number seven weeks." The Feast of Unleavened bread was at the beginning of harvest; the Feast of Weeks at the end of the grain harvest.

10. The word for **feast** here usually means a pilgrimage festival. In earlier days it was celebrated at the local sanctuaries with freewill offerings and great social festivity.

11. Deut. preserves the family character and the social joys, but insists that the pilgrimage shall be to the one lawful sanctuary. The great concern of the writer is not with the character or measure of the gift, but with the place of offering.

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stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are in the midst of thee, in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there.

12. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in [1] Egypt: and thou shalt observe and do these statutes.

13. Thou shalt keep the feast of *tabernacles* [2] seven days, after that thou hast gathered in from thy

14. threshing-floor and from thy winepress: and thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and [3] thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the fatherless,

15. and the widow, that are within thy gates. Seven days shalt thou keep a feast unto the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD [4] shall choose: because

[1] Sam. Gr. insert *the land of*. [2] m. Heb. *booths*. [3] Sam. Gr. om. *and*. [4] Sam. Gr. add *thy God*.

12. See 15:15. This is an agricultural festival, but the motive for generosity to the needy is drawn from Israel's history.

13–17. The Feast of Booths, cf. Exod. 23:16; 34:22 (JE); Num. 29:12–38; Lev. 23:33 ff. (P and H). In JE it is called the Pilgrimage-festival of Ingathering; in P and later books of the O. T. it is named, as here, the Pilgrimage-festival of Booths. As a widely observed and popular feast it is sometimes referred to emphatically as the Festival or Pilgrimage. Some refer its origin to nomadic times, when the Arabs resorted, as they still do, to the oases to gather their supply of dates; others to the custom of the villagers during vintage taking up their abode in the vineyards in temporary booths and huts. See the following passages: Lev. 23:40; Neh. 8:14; Isa. 16:10; 1 Kgs. 8:2.

13. For explanation of the name see the passage in Lev. The importance of this feast is seen in the length of the time devoted to it; the earlier codes do not define the length, the later add another day.

15. The vintage in Palestine comes about September, some four months after wheat-harvest. When all is gathered in, there is to be a festival of unmixed joy, celebrated in the spirit of gratitude and generosity.

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the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase,
and in all the work of thine hands, and thou shalt be
16. altogether joyful. Three times in a year shall all thy D[a]
males appear [1] before the LORD thy God in the place
which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened
bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of
tabernacles: and they shall not appear [1] before the
17. LORD empty: every man [2]shall give as he is able,[2]
according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which
he hath given thee.
18. Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy
gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, accord-

[1] Sam. *see (the face of Yahweh).* [2] m. Heb. *according to the gift of his hand.*

16–17. Summary reference to the three feasts. Probably the original form of the command was, **three times in a year shall all thy males** *see the face of Yahweh.* In primitive times the visitor to the sanctuary saw some symbol of the God. So in Isa. 1:12, and some other passages; cf. 2 Sam. 3:13. These two verses, perhaps by an editor based on Exod. 23:14, 17; 34:20–23; since they do not mention the Passover and give special prominence to males; compare v. 14.

17. Compare 2 Cor. 8:12; 9:7.

7. Laws relating to Officers of the Community: Judges, Kings, Priests, and Prophets; 16:18–18:22 (except 16:21–17:7)

18–20. It is probable that in early days the elders or chief men in a village or town would settle disputed cases, subject to appeal to a higher authority where such was in existence. Many cases were, no doubt, referred to the priest as the representative of God; cf. Isa. 28:7. In Exod. 18:15 f. seeking a judicial decision is called "inquiring of God," and civil decisions are regarded as "statutes and laws of God." The abolition of the local sanctuaries and the removal of the priests made it necessary to appoint *secular* judges to take their place. Hence the subject occupies a legitimate and important place in the Deuteronomic legislation.

18. A broad statement, with no attempt to deal with details of administration. **Officers**, some kind of subordinate officials named elsewhere along with elders (29:10) and war leaders

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ing to thy tribes: and they shall judge the people
19. with righteous judgement. [1]Thou shalt not wrest judgement[2]; thou shalt not respect persons: neither shalt thou take a gift[2]; for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words[3] of the righteous.
20. [4]That which is altogether just[4] shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.
21. Thou shalt not plant thee an Asherah of any kind of tree beside the altar of the LORD thy God, which
22. thou shalt make thee. Neither shalt thou set thee up a pillar[5] which the LORD thy God hateth.

[1] Sam. Syr. Tar. begin with *and*. [2] SV wrest *justice* and *bribe* for *gift*.
[3] m. *cause*. [4] m. Heb. *Justice, justice*. [5] m. *obelisk*.

(20:5). One of the deepest needs of any community is the righteous administration of justice, and that was the one thing lacking in Eastern lands; cf. Isa. 5:7.

19. This verse can be supplied from Exod. 23:6–8 (Book of the Covenant) and Deut. 1:17. The prophets constantly denounce the greed and partiality by which the sources of justice are poisoned.

20. To this demand of the earlier law and the prophets there is added an exhortation quite in the Deuteronomic style.

8. *Further Prohibition of Heathen Practices and Idolatry;* 16:21–17:7

Two passages which break the connection. See note on 12:32.

21–22. The Asherahs and pillars of the Canaanites are to be destroyed; cf. 7:5; 12:3; and such things must not be introduced into the worship of Yahweh. The **Asherah** was a wooden pole planted near to the altar, an imitation of the sacred trees that were held in veneration by the Canaanites, Judg. 6:25–30; 1 Kgs. 14:23. The **pillar**, or obelisk, was of stone, originally a natural boulder regarded as the home of a deity, Gen. 28:18, later replaced by an artificial pillar, Jer. 43:13. Such a pillar was a mark of a holy place, and in earlier times it was used without scruple in the worship of Yahweh, but was in later days rejected and denounced because of its superstitious associations; cf. Exod. 24:1; Isa. 19:19; Mic. 5:13; Lev. 26:1. Some

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17. Thou shalt not sacrifice unto the LORD thy God an
ox, or a sheep, wherein is a blemish, *or* [1] any evil-
favouredness: [1] for that is an abomination unto the
LORD thy God.
2. If there be found in the midst of thee, within any
of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee,
man or woman, that doeth that which is evil in the
sight of the LORD thy God, in transgressing his cov-
3. enant, and hath gone and served other gods, and wor-
shipped them, or the sun, or the moon, or any of the
4. host of heaven, which I have not commanded: and it

[1] SV anything evil.

scholars maintain that the Asherah and pillar were the symbols of a goddess Asherah (whose place was later taken by Astarte) and of Baal respectively. Thus dramatically in a speech by Moses customs are denounced which existed in Judah six centuries after his time; cf. 2 Kgs. 23:14.

1. Animals offered in sacrifice must be without blemish. There is no such regulation in JE; H, Lev. 22:17–25, has a detailed statement of prohibited defects. See Lev. 1:3, 10 (P); Mal. 1:7–8. If there is any relation with the context it must be in the thought that such offerings were quite acceptable at heathen altars. The spirit of this law, if not its exact form, is needed in modern times.

2–7. An Israelite found guilty of idolatry is to be put to death. Compare the brief form in JE, "He that sacrificeth unto any god, save Yahweh alone, shall be utterly destroyed," Exod. 22:20. In Chap. 13 the punishment of death has been prescribed for those who attempt to entice others into idolatry, now it is decreed for those who practise it. These may be parallel recensions of older laws.

2. **That which is evil.** Defined in the next verse. On the **covenant** see 4:13.

3. The worship of **the host of heaven**, imported from Babylonia and Assyria, was dangerous to the Hebrew religion in the reign of Manasseh and the days immediately following. See 4:19; Zeph. 1:5; Jer. 7:18, etc.; Ezek. 8:16. **Which I have not commanded.** Since this is not a speech of God, perhaps this clause is an editorial addition; cf. Jer. 7:31.

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be told thee, [1]and thou hast heard of it,[1] then shalt thou inquire diligently, and, behold, if it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought
5. in Israel; then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, [2]which have[2] done this evil thing, unto thy gates even the man or the woman;[3] [4]and thou
Heb. 10:28 6. shalt stone them with stones, that they die.[4] At the mouth of two witnesses, or [5]three witnesses, shall he that is to die be put to death; at the mouth of one
7. witness he shall not be put to death. The hand of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So thou shalt put away the evil from the midst of thee.
8. If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judge-

[1] Gr. om. [2] SV *who hath.* [3] Gr. om. which have done this evil thing, unto thy gates even the man or the woman. [4] SV *stone them to death with stones.* [5] Sam. Gr. Syr. add *at the mouth of.*

4. The same phrases as in 13:14.

5. Gr. and Vg. do not repeat the phrase **the man or the woman**. The stoning takes place outside the city in front of the gates so that the city will not be polluted; cf. Lev. 24:14; Acts. 7:58; Heb. 13:12. The severity of these laws shows the fierce fashion in which the Hebrew religion was at this time fighting for its life; the struggle between the prophetic and popular religion was terrible in its intensity. These laws were not so much needed in the later codes when the battle for monotheism was practically won.

6,7. There is at least a strain of humanity in the safeguard that not less than two witnesses shall be required for conviction; and that the witnesses shall take upon themselves a heavy share of the responsibility.

8–13. Resumes the question of judicial procedure. The central court of appeal for difficult cases is to be at Jersualem; its decisions are to be implicitly obeyed, on pain of death. We have no further information concerning the constitution of this Supreme Court. In 1:17 Moses is the final arbiter; cf. Exod. 18:26. In later times the kings hold this position, 2 Sam. 12:1–6; 15:2. According to 2 Chron. 19:8, Jehoshaphat established such a court.

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ment, between blood and blood, [1] between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up unto the place which the LORD
9. thy God shall choose; and thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days: and thou [2] shalt inquire; and they
10. shall shew thee the sentence of judgement: and thou shalt do according to the tenor of the sentence, which they shall shew thee from that place which the LORD [3] shall choose; and thou shalt observe to do according
11. to all that they shall teach thee: according to the tenor of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgement which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not turn aside from the sentence which they shall shew thee, to the right hand,
12. nor to the left. And the man that doeth presumptuously, in not hearkening unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the LORD thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and thou shalt
13. put away the evil from Israel. And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously.

[1] Sam. Gr. add *and*. [2] Sam. Gr. *they*. [3] Sam. Gr. add *thy God*.

8. **Hard**, *i.e.* exceptional, wonderful. There is difficulty in deciding the exact shade of a man's offence or the class in which his crime is to be classified.

9. **The judge**. Whether original or not, probably refers to the king. It seems better to read with Gr. Sam. "*they* shall inquire."

11. The word **law** is the Hebrew word *Torah* and in the previous verse the same root is used in the sense of *teach* or direct. This word *Torah* has an interesting history: at first it means teaching or direction, then it comes to mean a precept, a body of precepts, and finally it is the Hebrew name for the first five books of the O. T., the law or *Torah* of Moses. The statement here is that authoritative direction is given by the priests and judges

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D[R] 14. When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein; and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are round
15. about me; thou shalt [1]in any wise[1] set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not put a foreigner over thee,

[1] SV *surely.*

in Jerusalem, as the representatives of Yahweh. When once given it is absolutely binding, and disobedience to it is to be punished as a form of religious apostasy.

14–20. The king, his character and duties. This law is peculiar to Deut. and is probably here a supplementary passage, in whole or part. It should be compared with the statements concerning the origin of the kingship in 1 Sam. 8 and 10. There we have two accounts, one which pictures the rise of the kingdom as a natural development, meeting the new circumstances of the nation, the other which represents it as a form of rebellion against and apostasy from Yahweh. The latter position could scarcely have been taken by Samuel if he had been acquainted with the law of Deuteronomy. The present passage has a very slight contact with actual political affairs and does not enter into constitutional details, it merely gives certain broad warnings and sketches a particular ideal for the monarch; an attempt, perhaps, to elaborate the statement found in 1 Sam. 10 : 25.

14. This implies that the people are at liberty to choose a king if the following conditions are observed, cf. 1 Sam. 8 : 5. **Like as all the nations**, etc. Does the use of the phrase here suggest that the author thinks of the kingdom as a heathenish institution?

15. The king is to be appointed by the people but also chosen by their God. See Hos. 8 : 4. In Judah the prophets and priests as representatives of Yahweh played their part in the choice of a king, and there was an orderly succession. In the North Kingdom there was more frequent change and more turbulent faction. The king must on no account be a foreigner. The real reason for this prohibition is not known; there is no part of their history when the people showed any tendency to choose foreigners. For friendly feeling towards a foreign ruler, see Isa. 45 : 1–4.

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16. which[1] is not thy brother. Only he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall
17. henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself
18. silver and gold. And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of *that which is*
19. before the priests the Levites: and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do

[1] SV *who*, and in similar cases.

16. The aversion of the prophets to horses may be seen from such passages as Hos. 14:3; Isa. 2:7; 30:16; Mic. 1:13; 5:10. They were regarded as a sign of foreign luxury and an imitation of foreign war customs which implied a lack of trust in Israel's God. The religious leaders desired that the nation should retain as long as possible its primitive simplicity and comparative purity. So far as we can learn Solomon was the first to introduce horses from Egypt, 1 Kgs. 10:28. **Cause the people to return to Egypt.** Sending merchants there to bring horses or allowing Israelite slaves to be sent there in exchange for these coveted animals. We do not know where the prohibition was written, perhaps in a book or part of a book that has been lost. For different feeling as to Egypt, see 23:7.

17. Reflects the evils and excesses of Solomon's reign, 1 Kgs. 11:3–8; 1 Sam. 8.

18. In the remainder of the passage the king is pictured as a scribe and student of the law. **A copy of this law.** Gr. translates erroneously this *deuteronomion*, this twofold or second law, hence the name of the present book. Here we have the beginnings of the scribal activity and the excessive valuation of the written law which marked the latest period of Jewish national history. The religion of the book brought with it great advantages, but there were also great dangers. When the worship of the letter reached

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20. them: that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel.

D 18. The priests the Levites, *even* [1] all the tribe of Levi, shall have no portion nor inheritance with Israel: they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by
2. fire, and his inheritance. And they shall have no inheritance among their brethren: the LORD is their
3. inheritance, as he hath spoken unto them. And this shall be the priests' due from the people, from them that offer a sacrifice, whether it be ox or sheep, that

[1] m. *end.*

its height the scribes pictured God himself as busy with the study of the Law. It is expected that the king by constant and careful study of the book will become a pattern of humility and strict obedience.

18 : 1–8. The income of the priests. The tribe of Levi shall have no inheritance in Israel, but shall live upon the sacrificial gifts; this applies, in the first place, to the priests officiating at Jerusalem, but also to the Levites from the country who came to settle there. In JE "priests" and "sons of Levi" are mentioned, but their rights and duties are not defined, Exod. 19 : 22–24; 32 : 26–28; in P they are the subject of elaborate regulations. This passage, in harmony with the popular character of Deut., simply sets forth what the people owe to the priests. In the Priestly Code the revenues are different; in Deut. "Levites" includes all members of the tribe, while in P it means those members who are *not* priests. Deut., however, does not recognize "the sons of Aaron" as possessing a superior and exclusive right in contradistinction to other "sons of Levi."

1–2. The statement appears in twofold form. The priests are to have no territorial possessions, but must live from the proceeds of the altar. Yahweh's fire-offerings and his inheritance shall they eat. Fire-offering occurs in Josh. 13 : 14; 1 Sam. 2 : 28; and 62 times in P.

3. Perhaps a citation from an older law. Cheeks and maw

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they shall give unto the priest the shoulder, and the
4. two cheeks, and the maw. The firstfruits of thy
corn,[1] of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the first of
5. the fleece of thy sheep, shalt thou give him. For the
LORD thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes,
[2] to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him
and his sons for ever.[2]
6. And if a Levite come from any of thy gates out of
all Israel, where he sojourneth, and come with all
the desire of his soul unto the place which the LORD
7. shall choose; then he shall minister in the name of
the LORD his God, as all his brethren the Levites do,
8. which stand there before the LORD. They[3] shall
have like portions to eat, beside that which cometh
of the sale of his patrimony.

[1] SV grain. [2] Sam. Gr. read *to stand before Yahweh thy God, to minister unto him and to bless in his name, him and his sons among the children of Israel.* [3] Sam. Gr. *he.*

not elsewhere mentioned. The **maw**, according to ancient authorities, was the fourth stomach of ruminants; it was considered a delicacy at Athens. P prescribes the *breast* and the right *thigh* as the priests' part of the peace-offerings. Compare 1 Sam. 2: 13–16.

4. See Num. 18: 12; 2 Chron. 31: 5. The fourth item is mentioned only here. The offering of first fruits was a primitive and widely spread custom; God must first have his share in acknowledgment of his goodness. This verse seems to be a repetition of 14: 23.

5. The Levites have a right to their support because they exercise the priestly functions as stated in 10: 8.

6–8. These verses give a decision on the important question how the Levites of the country sanctuaries are to be provided for when those sanctuaries are abolished. If they come willingly to Jerusalem, from the places where they have had their residence, they shall stand, as to ministry and income, on the same footing as their brethren of the central sanctuary. The Levite is called a *sojourner* because he has no permanent landed property.

8. Brings some qualification, but it is obscure; the close of the verse, *besides his sellings according to the fathers*, does not

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9. When thou art come into the land which the LORD
thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after
10. the abominations of those nations. There shall not
be found with thee any one that maketh his son or
his daughter to pass through the fire, one that useth
divination, one that practiseth augury, or an en-
11. chanter, or a sorcerer, or [1] a charmer, or a consulter
with a familiar spirit, or a wizard, or [1] a necromancer.

[1] Sam. Gr. om. *or*.

convey any clear information. The conjecture, *except those that were idol-priests and conjurers of the dead*, is attractive, but not reliable. The writer evidently does not know of the forty-eight cities allotted to the tribe in P, Num. 35:1–8; Josh. 21. Human nature being what it is, it was difficult to carry out this humane provision; cf. 2 Kings 23:9; 1 Sam. 2:36. Note the important statement, "And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them; so that the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field," Neh. 13:10.

9–14. Prohibition of various forms of divination. See 12:31; Exod. 22:18 (JE); Lev. 18:21; 20:2–5 (H), etc.

10. **Maketh . . . to pass through the fire**, *i.e.* to Molech, a heathen practice often denounced in the O. T., but the precise nature and object of the sacrifice is not clear; it may be that the child was slain and then offered as a burnt offering to the god, Ezek. 16:21. In this connection some suppose that it refers to a kind of *ordeal*, in which an omen was derived from the observation whether the victim passed through the flames unharmed or not. **Divination**, drawing lots by means of headless arrows inscribed with names, Ezek. 21:21–22. **Augury**, another species of divination, the precise form of which is not known; cf. Lev. 19:26; 2 Kgs. 21:6; Mic. 5:12. **Enchanter**, or one that observeth omens; by means of a cup in Gen. 44:5, 15. See also Lev. 19:26; 2 Kgs. 17:17. After these three terms relating to divination we have two referring to magic. **A sorcerer**, AV *witch*, one who seeks to influence events by means of things supposed to have magical power; cf. Exod. 7:11; Mic. 5:12.

11. **Charmer**. One who ties magic knots or weaves spells. Then follow three terms relating to the various modes of consulting the world of spirits. **A consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard**. Should rather be, "one that consulteth a ghost or a

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12. For whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto the LORD:[1] and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before
13. thee. Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God. Matt. 5:38
For these nations, which[2] thou shalt possess,[3] hearken unto them that practise augury, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.
15. The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Acts 3:22; 7:37
prophet[4] from the midst of thee, of thy brethren,[4]

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. add *thy God*. [2] SV *that* instead of *which* and in similar cases, *e.g.* v. 20, etc. [3] SV *dispossess*. [4] Sam. Gr. read *from the midst of thy brethren*.

familiar spirit." The etymology of the word (*ōb*) here translated "ghost" is unknown; the word rendered **familiar spirit** seems to mean *knowing one* or *the one known*. The first word is nearly always represented in Gr. by *ventriloquists*, referring to the fact that the ghost spoke through the body of the medium in a twittering voice; cf. 1 Sam. 28:3 ff.; Isa. 8:19; 29:4. The second may perhaps be understood of a spirit at the call of a particular person, Acts 16:16; though this distinction is not quite certain. **Necromancer**, lit., "one who inquires of the dead." It is not certain in what way these inquiries were made, or how this particular form of inquiry differs from the other two. These things we would to-day class under spiritualism, hypnotism, etc.; in some cases there might be blind faith, but there was liable to be much trickery. The prophets had protested vigorously against meddling with this dark region of morbid experience, Isa. 2:6; Mic 3:6; Jer. 27:9; 29:8.

12. Such things and the persons who take part in them are repulsive to the God of Israel, 12:31. Because of these very things the heathen are driven out to make way for a healthier people and a more wholesome life, v. 14.

13. A man who has a living, whole-hearted faith in God will not need such false stimulant and support.

15–22. If the remainder of this chapter is from the same pen, then the connection is that the Israelites do not need to seek help in such questionable quarters, because Yahweh has given them true prophets to answer their inquiries and guide their conduct. At any rate, as it now stands, God's gift of true prophecy to Israel is set in contrast with the vain magic of the heathen.

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16. like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; according
to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in
Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not
hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let
17. me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And
the LORD said unto me, They have well said that
Acts 3:22; 7:37 18. which they have spoken. I will raise them up a
prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee;
and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall
19. speak unto them all that I shall command him. And
it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken
unto my[1] words which he shall speak in my name,
20. I will require it of him. But the prophet, which shall
speak a word presumptuously in my name, which I
have not commanded him to speak, or that shall
speak in the name of other gods, that same prophet
21. shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall

[1] Sam. Gr. Vg. *his* (*words*); some Gr. Mss. read *whatever that prophet shall speak in my name.*

15. **Like unto me** is peculiar, since Moses does not elsewhere in the Law speak in his own person. This is not a prediction of one particular prophet, but it means that a prophet will be provided to meet the needs that arise from time to time. It was natural afterwards, especially when prophecy had practically ceased, to apply this to the ideal prophet who is to be in a pre-eminent sense that which Moses was, a mediator between man and God, Jn. 6:14; 7:40; Acts 3:22; 7:37.

16–19. As the people at Horeb asked that Moses should act as mediator between them and Yahweh, and the request was well received, so after the death of Moses the same principle will apply and men will be raised up to bear the divine word. Such men will be worthy of full obedience as representatives of Yahweh, 5:23–31.

20. But there are two classes of prophets that must be rejected and punished, first those who arrogantly speak false things in the name of Yahweh, and, second, those who speak in the name of other gods. The latter have already been dealt with, 13:5.

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we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken?
22. When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken: the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously, thou[1] shalt not be afraid of him.

II. A MISCELLANEOUS BODY OF LAWS RELATING TO THE TRIAL OF CRIMINALS, WAR, THE FAMILY, ETC.; 19:1–24:4

19. When the LORD thy God shall cut off the nations, D whose land the LORD thy God giveth thee, and thou

[1] Gr. *ye*.

21. The question then arises how can the false prophet be recognized, that is, one who professes to be a messenger of Israel's God, but brings a false message? There are frequent references in Jer. and Ezek. to false prophets who delivered popular and delusive messages.

22. If a man utters a prediction in the name of Yahweh and it does not come to pass, then it may be inferred that he is a false prophet and there is no need to give him any reverence; he may be punished as a discredited messenger. Compare with this Jer. 18:7–10 and the picture of Jonah waiting for the fulfilment of his prediction. This, of course, is a very external test which can only apply either to prophets of the past or events of the immediate future. A comparison with Chap. 13 seems to show that Yahweh does not hinder wonders being wrought in the name of other gods, but will not allow his own name to be misused. External tests of this kind are very difficult to apply to real life; living prophecy is a much larger thing than mechanical prediction.

It is difficult to find any one clear principle binding together this section of the legislation. The question of the origin of the laws, as here arranged, is a complex one, seeing that D probably placed side by side laws already in existence and that his work may have been revised and enlarged.

1. *Law concerning the Cities of Refuge;* 19:1–13

1–13. In ancient times altars, temples, and sacred places were "sanctuaries," in the sense that a criminal or accused person could

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succeedest them, and dwellest in their cities, and in
2. their houses; thou shalt separate[1] three cities for
thee in the midst of thy land, which the LORD thy God
3. giveth thee to possess it. Thou shalt prepare thee
the way, and divide the borders of thy land, which the
LORD thy God causeth thee to inherit, into three parts,
4. that every manslayer may flee thither. And this is
the case of the manslayer, which shall flee thither and
live: whoso killeth his neighbour unawares, and hated
5. him not in time past; as when a man goeth into the

[1] SV *set apart*, and in v. 7 and elsewhere for *separate*.

flee there for refuge, 1 Kgs. 1:50; 2:28; Exod. 21:13. The stern law of blood revenge made such asylums necessary for the protection of the innocent manslayer; cf. Gen. 9:6. When an attempt was made to carry out the Deuteronomic law of one central sanctuary, provision had to be made for meeting this need, after the local sanctuaries had lost their sacred character. There are various references to this subject in the documents. The order of these statements may have been in the following manner, though we must remember that on such a question absolute certainty cannot be reached: (1) Demand for these cities of refuge by D as a result of the law of centralization, Deut. 19:1–7; 11–13. (2) Moses is represented as setting an example, to some extent, of the fulfilment of this law, Deut. 4:41–43 (R). (3) This leads a later editor to state that six will probably be required, Deut. 19:8–10. (4) Six cities are definitely demanded, three on each side of the Jordan, Num. 35 (P). (5) Joshua appoints the six cities of refuge, the names being those of places where ancient sanctuaries were situated, Josh. 20 (P).

1. Simple statement of the time when the law is to come into force, cf. 12:29.

2. The term "Cities of Refuge" has its origin, not in Deut., but in Num. 35:11 (P); compare Josh. 20:7 ff.

3. The land is to be divided into three parts so that each city is to form the centre of a district and is to be made easily accessible. The writer of this evidently has in view a comparatively small range of country.

4. **Unawares**, lit., *without knowing*, *i.e.* without intention. He had no motive, no desire, to injure his companion.

5. An illustration of the manner in which such a thing could

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forest with his neighbour to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the axe to cut down the tree, and the head [1] slippeth from the helve,[2] and lighteth upon his neighbour, [3] that he die; he shall flee unto
6. one of these cities and live: lest the avenger of blood pursue the manslayer, while his heart is hot, and overtake him, because the way is long, and smite him mortally; whereas he was not worthy of death, inas-
7. much as he hated him not in time past. Wherefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt separate three
8. cities for thee. And if the LORD thy God enlarge thy border, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, and give thee all the land which he promised to give unto thy
9. fathers; if thou shalt keep all this commandment to do it, which I command thee this day, to love the LORD thy God, and to walk ever in his ways; then shalt thou add three cities more for thee, beside these three:
10. that [4] innocent blood [4] be not shed in the midst of thy

[1] m. Heb. *iron.* [2] m. *the tree.* [3] SV *so that he dieth.* [4] m. *the blood of an innocent man.*

happen. Not an imaginary case merely; such accidents suggested the need for such a law. With our well-ordered courts dealing deliberately with all possible cases we do not realize how slowly the customs which safeguard public and private interests have come into being.

6. Blood that is shed wrongfully demands vengeance, Gen. 4:10. The nearest of kin is **the avenger of blood**, the one who in this case enforces the claim of justice; cf. 2 Sam. 14:11; Num. 35:19. **The avenger of blood** is here regarded as an essential part of the social order, but it is felt that his duty should be exercised with due deliberation.

8–10. These verses, in the style and spirit of Deut., express the idea that in the case of an increase of territory, as a reward of obedience, three more cities may be needed. If 4:41–43 and the whole of this chapter came from the same pen, it would mean that *nine* cities might be necessary, three on the east and six on the west side of the Jordan.

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land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an in-
11. heritance, and so blood be upon thee. But if any man
hate his neighbour, and lie in wait for him, and rise up
against him, and smite him mortally that he die; and
12. he flee into one of these cities: then the elders of his
city shall send and fetch him thence, and deliver him
into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die.
Thine eye shall not pity him, but thou shalt put
13. away [1] the innocent blood [1] from Israel, that it may go
well with thee.
14. Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark,
which they of old time have set, in thine inheritance

[1] m. the blood of the innocent (Sam. *the* innocent blood).

10. The guilt of the **innocent blood** shed in hasty zeal by the avenger of blood would be shared by the tribe or community to which he belonged.

11–13. See Exod. 21:14 and Num. 35. The wilful murderer must surely die. The elders of the city in which he has taken refuge must hand him over so that the avenger of blood may inflict the punishment; private revenge has begun to pass over into public justice, but the process is not complete. This is to be recognized a little more clearly in P, where we read "the congregation shall judge between the smiter and the avenger of blood," Num. 35:24. **Elders** are often mentioned in the O. T. as the representatives of the people. They constitute a sort of local authority and transact public business. They are named in Deut. 21, 22, 25, as invested with judicial functions. Their relationship to the judges (16:18) is not clear.

13. Hebrew law did not allow the payment of a fine or of blood money in case of murder; only blood could atone for blood.

2. *Law of the Boundary;* 19:14

14. A neighbor's landmark must not be removed. This is an ancient and widely spread law; among the Greeks and Romans boundaries were sacred, protected by the gods. That such a law was needed is shown by the protests of the prophets; Isa. 5:8; Hos. 5:10. **They of old time,** *i.e.* the ancestors of the Israelite peasants. This phrase is written from the standpoint of one dwelling in Canaan.

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which thou shalt inherit, in the land that the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it.

15. One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall a matter be established. [1] If an unrighteous witness rise up against any man to testify against him of wrong doing; [2] then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges which shall be in those days; and the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to do unto his brother: so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee. And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall

Matt. 18 : 16
2 Cor. 13 : 1
1 Tim. 5 : 19

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. *and (if)*. [2] m. *rebellion*.

3. *The Law of Witnesses;* 19 : 15–21

15–21. No one is to be condemned by the judge on the evidence of one witness; a false witness shall suffer the punishment which he sought to bring upon the accused person. It is possible that in 17 : 8 ff., where it deals with the court of appeal in Jerusalem, it should be "priests" alone, and here, where it is a tribunal in a provincial town, "judges" alone.

15. Two or three witnesses are absolutely necessary, not only in the case of capital charges, 17 : 6; Num. 35 : 30; but also as a general principle of criminal law.

16. **Wrong doing.** The original word is used elsewhere of religious apostasy, 13 : 5, "he hath spoken *rebellion*"; here it has a more general reference.

17. This verse may have read originally, *Then the two men who have the dispute shall stand before the judges.* See next verse.

19. The perjurer shall receive the punishment which he intended to bring upon his brother.

20. The deterrent effect of swift, severe punishment is often set forth in terse, vigorous language.

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henceforth commit no more any such evil in the midst
21. of thee. And[1] thine eye shall not pity; life *shall go* for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

D 20. When thou goest forth to battle against thine enemies,[2] and seest horses, and chariots, *and* a people more than thou, thou shalt not be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God is with thee, which
D[R] 2. brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be, when ye draw nigh unto the battle, that the
3. priest shall approach and speak unto the people, and shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel, ye draw nigh this

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. om. *and*. [2] So read Sam. Gr. Syr. Tar. Vg., Heb. *enemy* (sing.).

21. The famous *lex talionis*, like for like. In a different connection, cf. Exod. 21:24 (JE); Lev. 24:18–20 (H). Similarly in the Code of Hammurabi: "If a man has borne false witness in a trial, or has not established the statement he has made, if that case be a capital trial, that man shall be put to death. If he has borne witness in a civil suit, he shall pay the damages in that suit."

4. *Laws relating to the Conduct of War; Chap.* 20

These laws are peculiar to Deut.; they breathe the humane spirit which is characteristic of so many parts of the book; while not furnishing a complete set of rules for war, they aim to soften some of its harsher features. See Amos 1:3; Hos. 13:16; 2 Sam. 8:2; 12:31. The original place of this section may have been immediately after 21:9; while 21:1–9 goes well with Chap. 19.

1. In the hour of battle the Israelites must rely upon the God who has helped them so gloriously in the past; this is a noble faith, but may lead to disaster, if acted upon hastily and in an unintelligent manner; cf. 2 Kgs. 23:29. They were afraid of cavalry, which was the great strength of the Egyptian and Assyrian armies.

2–4. A duplication of v. 1, in the plural, with mention of the priest. It is strange that nothing is said about the king, who was the natural leader in time of war, if these verses come from a time when there was a king. Priests would be in attendance upon the

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day unto battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint; fear not, nor tremble, neither be ye af-
4. frighted at them; for the LORD your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.
5. And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, D
What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedi-
6. cate it. And what man is there that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not used the fruit thereof? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the
7. battle, and another man use the fruit thereof. And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his

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army to offer sacrifices and consult the oracle; cf. 1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam. 11:11. Note the phrase, "Prepare (lit., *consecrate*) ye war," etc., Jer. 6:4; Mic. 3:5.

5–7. Certain classes of men are to be allowed to go home before the war begins. It may be, as has been suggested, that the form of this law was in the remote past influenced by the polytheistic conceptions of ancient peoples, according to which each important sphere of human life had its own god or demon. Thus particular transactions, as the building of a house or planting of a vineyard, were under a special deity, whose good offices were secured by sacrifices and dedication services. The influence of such conceptions lingered long, but they were probably not present to the mind of this writer; he uses these laws to express the growing sense of the consideration demanded by the individual life. Of course, in times of tremendous strain, all such considerations would have to give way under the pressure of stern necessity.

5. **Officers**, subordinate officials, as in 1:15. This is the only place where the dedication of a private house is mentioned. See Num. 7:10; 1 Kgs. 8:63; Dan. 3:2–3.

6. **Used the fruit thereof**, lit., *not profaned it.* The first product of the vines had to be treated as sacred, Lev. 19:23–25.

7. If possible, the calamity of a man dying without an heir must be avoided. Chap. 24:5 goes still further in this direction.

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house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take
8. her. And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart melt as his heart.
9. And it shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking unto the people, that they shall appoint captains of hosts at the head of the people.
10. When thou drawest nigh unto a city to fight against
11. it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is[1] found therein shall become tributary[2] unto thee, and shall serve thee.
12. And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make
13. war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it: and when the LORD thy God delivereth it into thine hand, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the

[1] SV *are.* [2] m. *subject to task-work.*

8. For the dismissal of **the fainthearted**, see Judges 7:3. 1 Macc. 3:56 gives this interesting parallel: "And he said unto them that were building houses, or had betrothed wives, or were planting vineyards, or were fearful, that they should return every man to his house, according to the Law."

9. The subject of **they** is indefinite, hence it is not clear by whom the officers were to be appointed.

10–20. The manner in which besieged cities are to be treated.

10. In the first place the city must be invited to a peaceable surrender.

11. If the city thus peaceably surrenders and opens its gates to the invading army, its inhabitants shall become **tributary** or, better, with RV marg., "*subject to task-work*"; cf. Josh. 16:10; 1 Kgs. 9:21.

13–14. If the city is conquered after stubborn resistance, then all the male inhabitants must be killed, but the women, children, and substance may be saved and appropriated. This is a modification of the "ban," v. 16; 13:15–16; and it is a milder form of war than was common in those days; cf. Amos 1:13; Hos.

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14. sword: but the women, and the little ones, and the
cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil
thereof, shalt thou take for a prey unto thyself; and
thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the
15. LORD thy God hath given thee. Thus shalt thou do
unto all the cities which are very far off from thee,
16. which are not of the cities of these nations. But of
the cities of these peoples, which the LORD thy God
giveth thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive
17. nothing that breatheth; but thou shalt utterly de-
stroy[1] them; the Hittite, and the Amorite,[2] the
Canaanite, and the Perizzite,[3] the Hivite, and the
Jebusite; as the LORD thy God hath commanded
18. thee: that they teach you not to do after all their
abominations, which they have done unto their gods;
so should[4] ye sin against the LORD your God.
19. When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in mak-
ing war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy

[1] m. Heb. *devote.* [2] Gr. Syr. Vg. add *and.* [3] Sam. Gr. Syr. Tar. Vg. add *and.* [4] SV *would.*

13:16; even much milder than the close of a long siege in so-called Christian countries two or three centuries ago. This is what we might expect from the humane spirit, which in many respects pervades this book, but we must note also that one reason here is that it is no use destroying useful lives and good material where there is no danger on the side of religion. Compare 1 Sam. 15:9.

16. Where the cities are nearer, and there is danger of contamination in the sphere of religion, there the *ban* or *devotion* must be carried out in all its rigor. The religious reason is supreme; there is no idea of a missionary campaign in distant places by the power of the sword, but in their own territory the struggle for a simpler, nobler religion is to be carried on with fierce, uncompromising zeal. **Nothing that breatheth**, lit., *any breath*, Josh. 10:40; 11:11, *i.e.* all human beings; cf. Josh. 11:14.

19. It is reasonable to fight against men who are enemies of the nation, but not against trees that may yield nourishment. Severity against men or things is only justified when there is a powerful

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the trees thereof by wielding an axe against them; for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down; for is the tree of the field man, that it
20. should be besieged of thee? Only the trees which thou knowest that they be not trees for meat,[1] thou shalt destroy and cut them down; and thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until it fall.

D 21. If one be found slain in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be
2. not known who hath smitten him: then thy elders and

[1] SV *food.*

reason. Compare this with the command of the prophet Elisha, 2 Kgs. 3 : 19. By all means cut down wood for siege-works, Mic. 5 : 1; Ezek. 4 : 2, but do not indulge in wanton, wasteful destruction. This kind of destruction in times of war was common among ancient nations, Semites and Greeks. We have here a spirit of humanity struggling against national and religious limitations.

5. *Expiation for a Murder committed by an Unknown Hand;* 21 : 1–9

1–9. When the body of a murdered man is found in the field and it is not known who did the deed, the responsibility shall rest upon the nearest city, and its elders shall make expiation by means of a symbolic rite. This law is found only here. Similar laws are met with among other Semitic tribes; they spring from the endeavor to meet the demands of justice and prevent blood-feuds. It is well to note that the origin and transmission of such laws in oral and written form through many centuries is a complicated process. For example, to take only one point. As the law now stands, the killing of the heifer is not exactly a sacrifice; the priests who come upon the scene in v. 5 have no part in it, but it is highly probable from vs. 4 and 5 that it was originally a sacrificial procedure, the sacrifice being offered to appease the spirit of the dead; and while the present legislator may not have had that in mind, the post-Exilic editor who inserted v. 5 regarded it as a sacrificial ceremony requiring the presence of priests.

2. **Thy elders**; perhaps this phrase has come in from the follow-

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thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure
unto the cities which are round about him that is slain:
3. and it shall be, that the city which is nearest unto the
slain man, even the elders of that city shall take an[1]
heifer of the herd, which hath not been wrought with,
4. and[2] which hath not drawn in the yoke; and the
elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a
valley with running water, which is neither plowed nor
sown, and shall break the heifer's neck there in the
5. valley: and the priests the sons of Levi shall come DR
near; for them the LORD thy God hath chosen to
minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the
LORD; and according to their word shall every con-
6. troversy and every stroke be: and all the elders of that D
city, who are nearest unto the slain man, shall wash
their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in
7. the valley: and they shall answer and say, Our hands
have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it.

[1] SV *a* for *an*, and in similar cases elsewhere. [2] So read Sam. Gr. Syr., Heb. om. *and*.

ing verse; the judges decide the case, then the elders, representing the community, perform the ceremony.

3. It seems natural that the *nearest* city should be involved; there may, however, be a survival of the thought that the influence of the departed spirit was of limited extent.

4. All the circumstances point to a sacred place and a sacrificial act; cf. Num. 19: 2. Neither the place nor the animal have been appropriated to any profane use. The blood will either be absorbed in the earth or carried away by the running water.

5. The priests of the central sanctuary can scarcely be meant, as the scene might be transacted at a considerable distance from Jerusalem; if the verse is not secondary, it must mean members of the priestly tribe resident in the neighborhood; cf. 18: 6.

6. For washing of hands as a symbol of innocence, see Matt. 27: 24; compare Ps. 73: 13.

7. **They shall answer**, *i.e.* respond, in a liturgical sense, declaring that they have no knowledge of the murder.

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8. Forgive, O LORD, thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and suffer not innocent blood *to remain* in the midst of thy people Israel. And the blood shall
9. be forgiven them. So shalt thou put away the innocent blood from the midst of thee, when thou shalt do that which is right in the eyes of the LORD.
10. When thou goest forth to battle against thine enemies, and the LORD thy God delivereth them into thine[1] hands, and thou carriest them away captive,
11. and seest among the captives[2] a beautiful woman, and thou hast a desire unto her, and wouldest take her[3] to

[1] SV *thy* for *thine*, and in all similar cases. [2] Sam. *his captives*. [3] So Sam., Heb. om. *her*.

8. **Forgive**, better *clear* thy people, the term meaning originally to *cover* or *wipe off*. It is desired that the sin should be cancelled or blotted out. In the O. T. generally the word is used with God as subject; cf. 32:43; Jer. 18:23; in P mostly of the priest performing an atoning ceremony.

9. Until vengeance is taken or expiation made, the blood that has been shed clings to the earth and defiles it and cries to heaven, Gen. 4:10.

From 21:10 to the end of the legislative section of the book we have a miscellaneous collection of laws; many of them are small, detached pieces, and it is difficult to find any unifying principle running through them.

6. *The Marriage of a Woman taken Captive in War;* 21:10–14

The Israelite who wishes to contract such a marriage must bring the woman to his home and allow her to spend one month in mourning for her parents. After the marriage he cannot treat her as a slave, but must, in case he is dissatisfied with her, give her full freedom. This may not seem very *humane* to us, but it is distinctly so, in contrast to the barbarous practices in those ancient times. This law is peculiar to Deut., and it seems to go against its spirit, which is opposed to intermarriage with foreigners, 7:3. This is explained by saying that the regulation applies to distant foreigners and not to the Canaanites; the more probable explanation is that the force of old custom still asserts itself in these laws.

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12. thee to wife; then thou shalt bring her home to thine
house; and she shall shave her head, and pare her
13. nails; and she shall put the raiment of her captivity
from off her, and shall remain in thine house, and be-
wail her father and her mother a full month: and after
that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and
14. she shall be thy wife. And it shall be, if thou have no
delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she
will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou
shalt not deal with her as a slave,[1] because thou hast
humbled her.
15. If a man have two wives, the one beloved, and the
other hated, and they have borne him children, both
the beloved and the hated; and if the firstborn son be

[1] m. *as a chattel.*

12. **Pare**, lit., *make, i.e.* put into proper form; as the hair is not allowed to grow, probably the same applied to the nails; cf. 2 Sam. 19:24, *trimmed*, of the beard. In ancient Arabia a widow spent a year in seclusion, taking no care of her person, and at the close would pare her nails, etc.; see Chap. 14.

13. She changes the garments in which she was taken captive, for mourning garments. For the widow dwelling in the house, see Gen. 38:11. The usual mourning period was seven days, in special cases a month; cf. 34:8; Num. 20:29.

14. By marrying her he has taken her out of the category of slaves, so while he can divorce her, he must not sell her, Exod. 21:8. **Deal with her as a slave.** The meaning of the original word is uncertain; perhaps, to act in a despotic or arbitrary manner. The Hebrew had the right to divorce his wife, except in special cases where he is supposed to have forfeited that privilege. The Babylonian code makes similar provision for female slaves that have borne children to their master, and decrees that he shall give support for the children.

7. *The Right of the Eldest Son to a Double Portion is to be Maintained;* 21:15–17

15–17. The rule in early times was that the property passed to the male heirs who were under obligation to support the mother

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16. hers that was hated; then it shall be, in the day that
he causeth his sons to inherit that which he hath, that
he may not make the son of the beloved the firstborn
before[1] the son of the hated, which is the firstborn:
17. but he shall acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the
hated, by giving him a double portion of all that he
hath: for he is the beginning of his strength;[2] the right
of the firstborn is his.
18. If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which
will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his
mother, and though they chasten him, will not hearken
19. unto them: then shall his father and his mother lay

[1] m. *during the lifetime of.* [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. Tar. Vg. add *and.*

and unmarried sisters. The present law deals with a case that may be regarded as exceptional, and so needing a written enactment; cf. Gen. 29; 1 Sam. 1. The word *adversary* (1 Sam. 1 : 6, AV) has come in the Semitic dialects to mean *rival* (1 Sam. 1 : 6, RV), a sufficient testimony to the fact that polygamy did not tend to the peace of the household.

17. In the day when the man makes his will, he must recognize the right of the firstborn, he must act according to the law, and not from caprice or personal preference. **A double portion,** lit., *a mouth of two, i.e.* a twofold share.

8. *The Punishment of a Son who is obstinately Rebellious;* 21 : 18–21

18–21. In Deut. only, but compare 27 : 16; Exod. 21 : 15 (JE); Lev. 20 : 9 (H). Though it is scarcely probable that such a law was carried into practice, it is interesting as reflecting the ancient idea that reverence and obedience towards parents is of the very essence of piety and absolutely essential to the welfare of society. Among the Romans the father possessed the power of life and death over his children; this may have been so in Israel in early days, if so the present law implies a limitation of parental power by the introduction of public justice into the sphere of domestic discipline.

18. **Stubborn and rebellious**; cf. Jer. 5 : 23; Ps. 78 : 8.

19. The gateway (2 Sam. 18 : 24) was a meeting-place for the chief men of the city, where public business was transacted.

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hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his
20. city, and unto the gate of his place; and they shall say
unto the elders[1] of his city, This our son is stubborn
and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a
21. riotous liver, and a drunkard. And all the men of his
city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt
thou put away the evil from the midst of thee; and
all Israel shall hear, and fear.

22. And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, Acts 5 : 30; 10 : 39; Gal. 3 : 13
and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree;
23. his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but
thou shalt surely bury him the same day; for he that
is hanged is[2] accursed of God;[2] that thou defile not
thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an
inheritance.

22. Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go D

[1] Sam. Gr. *men*. [2] m. Heb. *the curse of God*.

20. **A riotous liver, and a drunkard.** Perhaps added from Prov. 23 : 21.

21. The legislator again shows his faith in the deterrent influence of capital punishment.

9. *The Case of a Criminal who has been Hanged;* 21 : 22–23

22–23. The criminal convicted of a serious offence was hanged, *after* being put to death, as an additional disgrace. Such a person is regarded as having the heavy curse of God resting upon him, Gal. 3 : 13. The presence of this God-cursed corpse defiled the land, and it was necessary to have it put away as soon as possible, Num. 35 : 33. Behind this it is possible that there lingers the primitive view that the spirit of an unburied man, especially of a malignantly wicked man, could wander about and cause trouble. The later religious language expresses that by saying that the land was defiled and that the curse of God rested upon it.

10. *Kindness to the Neighbor;* 22 : 1–4

1–4. This passage is evidently based on Exod. 23 : 4 f. (JE). The difference between the two passages is that there the object of

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astray, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely
2. bring them again unto thy brother. And if thy brother be not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it home to thine house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it,
3. and thou shalt restore it to him again.[1] And[2] so shalt thou do with his ass; and so shalt thou do with his garment; and so shalt thou do with every lost thing of thy brother's, which he hath lost, and thou hast found: thou mayest not hide thyself.
4. Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fallen down by the way, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again.
5. A woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto

[1] SV om. *again*. [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. om. *and*.

the kindness is "thine enemy," while here it is "thy brother." This is intelligible from the fact that the Deuteronomic point of view encourages a certain exclusiveness in relation to foreigners. If, however, the word *enemy* in Exod. is taken in a mere personal sense, then what we have here is a widening rather than a narrowing of this law of kindness; cf. 15 : 2; Matt. 5 : 44. It seems probable that the earlier law was given from a simple human standpoint, while the author of Deut. has always in view the nation as a sort of ecclesiastical community.

1, 3, 4. **Hide thyself**; see Isa. 58 : 7; Ps. 55 : 1.

2. A lost animal or other lost property is to be restored to its owner; in case he is unknown then it must be kept until he comes to claim it. **Seek after it**, better *require* or *demand it*.

11. *Minor Prescriptions: the Concealment of Sex; Sparing of the Mother-bird; Precaution against Accidents; Mingling of Species; Wearing of Tassels;* 22 : 5–12.

5. Men and women shall not hide their *sex* by wearing things peculiar to the other sex. This rule, which is peculiar to Deut., is not a mere matter of etiquette, it is a protest against heathen practices. In honor of certain gods there were processions in which men wore women's garments and women those of

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a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto the LORD thy God.

6. If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs,
7. thou shalt not take the dam with the young: thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, but the young thou mayest take unto thyself; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days.
8. When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.
9. Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with two kinds of

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the men, and these religious demonstrations were both superstitious and immoral. **That which pertaineth unto a man** is a general term including almost everything used or worn, as weapons, jewels, ornaments, etc.; cf. Gen. 27:3; 24:53; Lev. 13:49.

6–7. When a bird's nest is taken, the mother must be spared. If any ancient religious reasons lie behind this command, which is found only here, it is not possible to discern them now. There may be the idea that our right in the animal creation is limited to the use of the product, or the mere utilitarian principle that one must not kill the bird that lays the golden eggs. In any case we may say that the author of Deut. shows a friendly feeling towards animals; cf. 25:4.

8. The man who builds a house must take proper precautions against accidents. While the law is peculiar to Deut. we find in Exod. 21:33 a regulation based upon substantially the same principle, viz. that a man may be held responsible for the result of carelessness. In our modern life this principle has to receive indefinite extension and application. **Battlement**, or parapet, lit., a confining enclosure; the word occurs only here. The flat roof of an oriental house was used for a great variety of purposes. See Josh. 2:6; Judg. 16:27; 1 Sam. 9:25; Isa. 22:1; Matt. 24:17; Acts 10:9.

9–11. Different species of things are not to be joined together. This section connects very well with v. 5. Compare the slightly

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seed: lest the [1] whole fruit [1] be forfeited,[2] the seed which thou hast sown, and the increase of the vineyard.

10. Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together.

11. Thou shalt not wear a mingled stuff, wool and linen together.

12. Thou shalt make thee fringes[3] upon the four borders of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest thyself.

[1] m. Heb. *fulness*. [2] m. Heb. *consecrated*. [3] m. *twisted threads*.

different form in Lev. 19 : 19. The reason for this prohibition is no longer clear. The idea that God has created distinct species (Gen. 1), and that the goodness and beauty of the natural order is not to be disturbed, seems too abstract and advanced for this stage. There may be a reminiscence of the fact that in the polytheistic period different species and different forms of planting belonged to separate circles of worship with their own ceremonies; cf. Isa. 17 : 10. Isa. 28 : 25 f. does not seem to recognize these prohibitions.

9. **Vineyard.** In Lev. the more general word *field* is used; it is not certain which is the earlier form. **The whole fruit**, lit., fulness, RV m., is defined by the following phrase. **Forfeited**, lit., become *holy* or *consecrated*, *i.e.* become the property of the sanctuary.

10. In Palestine **an ox and an ass** are still sometimes yoked to the plough together.

11. **Mingled stuff**, a foreign word used in both places, here said to be a combination of wool and linen.

12. *Tassels* must be worn by the Israelites on the four corners of their mantles. A more elaborate statement of this law is found in Num. 15 : 37–41 (P). In this passage they are said to be reminders of God's commandments and of their own holy vocation. That which was formerly an amulet becomes a memorial of Yahweh's goodness. **Fringes**, *twisted threads* or *cords* (1 Kgs. 7 : 17, *wreaths*); in Num. *tassels*, a different word, a cord ending in a tassel. The later Jews had detailed prescriptions for the making of these cords. **Vesture**, the upper garment, a quadrangular piece of stuff thrown round the body like a plaid; it was also used for a covering at night, Exod. 22, 26. Num. has a word of more general signification. In later ages, when the Jews in foreign lands were persecuted, these tasselled cords were attached to an inner garment and finally transferred to the *Tallith*, or mantle worn at the time of morning prayer.

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13. If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and
14. hate her, and lay shameful things to her charge, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this this woman, and when I came nigh to her, I found
15. not in her the tokens of virginity: then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity unto the
16. elders of the city in the gate: and the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto
17. this man to wife, and he hateth her; and, lo, he hath laid shameful things [1] *to her charge*,[1] saying, I found not in thy daughter the tokens of virginity; and yet these are the tokens of my daughter's virginity. And they shall spread the garment before the elders of the
18. city. And the elders of that city shall take the man
19. and chastise him; and they shall amerce him in an hundred *shekels* of silver, and give them unto the father

[1] Heb. om, but so read Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg.

12. Charges of Unchastity and Cases of Adultery; 22: 13–30.

13–21. The case in which a man charges his wife with misconduct before marriage; with twofold result, first, the charge is false and the slandering husband is punished by paying a fine to the father and losing the power to divorce this particular wife, vs. 13–19; second, the woman is found guilty and is punished with the extreme penalty, being stoned to death.

20, 21. A barbarous and unsatisfactory mode of administering justice in regard to a delicate question. The people who still use it may well be called "primitive-minded."

13. The emotional Oriental was liable to pass quickly from passionate desire to unreasoning hate, 24: 3; 2 Sam. 13: 15.

14, 17. **Shameful things.** The derivation of the original is uncertain, perhaps, *frivolously invented charges*.

19. A fine of about sixty dollars (£12 10*s.* 0*d.*) payable to the father, whose character as a guardian has been injured by this slander. The man shall also keep the woman from whom he has unjustly tried to free himself.

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of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his
20. wife; he may not put her away all his days. But if this thing be true, that the tokens of virginity were not
21. found in the damsel: then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die:[1] because she hath wrought folly in Israel, [2]to play the harlot in her father's house:[2] so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee.
22. If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away the evil from Israel.
23. If there be a damsel that is a virgin betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie
24. with her; then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, being

[1] SV *stone her to death with stones*, similar in v. 24. [2] Sam. Gr. *to cause her father's house to commit whoredom* (or *to defile . . . with whoredom*).

21. If the charge is true, the woman is to be stoned in front of her father's house, which is supposed to be the scene of her shame. **Folly.** She has shown herself to be utterly lacking in moral sense, Gen. 34:7; 2 Sam. 13:12.

22. In the case of a man committing adultery with a married woman, they shall both be put to death, Exod. 20:14; Lev. 18:20; 20:10; the manner of execution is not prescribed in any of these passages, but was, no doubt, by stoning.

23, 24. The case of a betrothed maiden is treated in this and the immediately following verse. Betrothal was an important preliminary to marriage; the woman who was betrothed was practically in the position of a married woman, and is here treated as such. The woman is already the property of the man who has paid the marriage price, though the marriage is not yet actually complete. Hence where the woman can reasonably be judged to

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in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife: so thou shalt put away the evil from the midst of thee. 1 Cor. 5:13

25. But if the man find the damsel that is betrothed in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her; then
26. the man only that lay with her shall die; but unto the damsel thou [1] shalt do nothing; there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so is this
27. matter: for he found her in the field; the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her.
28. If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and
29. they [2] be found; then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty *shekels* of silver, and she shall be his wife, because he hath humbled her; he may not put her away all his days.
30. A man shall not take his father's wife, and shall not uncover his father's skirt.

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. *ye*. [2] Gr. *he*.

have been a consenting party, it comes under the head of adultery, and they must both die. In the city she might have made resistance and called for help; in the field her cry could not avail; she is therefore given the benefit of the doubt, and the man alone must die.

28, 29. Deals with the case of a maiden who is not betrothed. The law does not raise the question of the woman's guilt or innocence, but treats the man as one who has taken a wife by force. The man must pay to the father an average marriage price, and as a punishment he loses the privilege of divorce in this case, Exod. 21:32.

30. A man shall not marry his stepmother. It is difficult to say why this prohibition should stand alone here, unless it may be that the practice condemned was frequent at the time Deut. was written. The rules regulating marriages, as they now exist, have grown gradually during many centuries of experience and prog-

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D[R] 23. He that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, shall not enter into the assembly of the LORD.

2. A bastard shall not enter into the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation shall none of his enter into the assembly of the LORD.

3. An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation shall none belonging to them enter into the

4. assembly of the LORD for ever: because they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye

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ress. For a more elaborate treatment of the subject, see Lev. 18 : 6 ff.; 20 : 11 ff. That such marriages were entered into, we know from various passages, Gen. 35 : 22; 49 : 4; 2 Sam. 3 : 7; 16 : 21 f.; 1 Kgs. 2 : 17; Ezek. 22 : 10; 1 Cor. 5 : 1. In ancient Arabia a man's wives, like the rest of his property, passed to his heir; the son could thus claim his father's wives, except, of course, his own mother. These marriages are forbidden in the Koran for the future.

13. *A List of Those who are excluded and Those who may enter into Religious Communion in Israel;* 23 : 1–8

1–8. It is possible that this passage is a late post-exilic addition; the question, however, of its relation to other passages quoted below is a complicated one.

1. Eunuchs are to be excluded. This is not simply a protest against the mutilation of the body that God has given; it is aimed against practices that were used in certain heathenish forms of worship. Compare Isa. 56 : 4 f.; Acts 8 : 27; Jer. 34 : 19, for the position of eunuchs, which was evidently variable. For the phrase **assembly of Yahweh**, see Mic. 2 : 5; Lam. 1 : 10; Num. 16 : 3; 20 : 4 (P); 1 Chron. 28 : 8.

2. **Bastard**; cf. Zech. 9 : 6. A word of uncertain derivation; the term may mean one born from an incestuous union. If the passage is late, it might be a word of reproach for the children of the mixed marriages condemned in Neh. 13 : 23 ff.

3–6. The **Ammonite** and the **Moabite** must also be excluded because their ancestors, at the time of the Exodus, treated the Israelites in an unfriendly fashion. **The tenth generation**, practically perpetual exclusion. On this passage, note the following

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came forth out of Egypt; and because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor
5. of Mesopotamia,[1] to curse thee. Nevertheless the LORD thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the LORD thy God turned the curse into a blessing
6. unto thee, because the LORD thy God loved thee. Thou shalt not seek their peace nor their prosperity all thy days for ever.
7. Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; because
8. thou wast a stranger in his land. The children of the third generation that are born unto them shall enter into the assembly of the LORD.
9. When thou goest forth in camp against thine enemies, D

[1] m. Heb. *Aram-naharaim*.

points: (1) The *hostility* of the Ammonite is not mentioned in 2:19 ff., but in 2:29 it is implied that the Moabites *sold* the Israelites bread and water for money. (2) This is the only reference in Deut. to the Balaam narrative, Num. 22:5. (3) The contrast in disposition between vs. 6 and 7 is very strong. For the phrase **seek their peace**, see Jer. 29:7; Ezra 9:12. (4) The friendly spirit manifested towards Egypt and Edom is different from the ordinary Deuteronomic point of view, which advocates separation from the non-Israelite peoples. Elsewhere in Deut. the fact of Israel's sojourn in Egypt is used to strengthen the demand for sympathy and kindness towards the poor and the sojourners.

14. *Regulations for preserving the Ceremonial Cleanness of the Camp in Time of War;* 23:9–14

9–14. For similar, but not identical, rules, see Num. 5:1–4 (P); 12–14 has nothing corresponding to it in P, and it may be a later addition. Even in the old time Israel's wars were wars of Yahweh; the conduct of war was a sacred action; Yahweh was present personally or symbolically in the camp, and hence all ceremonial uncleanness was to be avoided; cf. Judg. 5:4 f.; 1 Sam. 4:3; 2 Sam. 11:11. There may be a survival of the view of very

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10. then thou shalt keep thee from every evil thing. If
there be among you any man, that is not clean by
reason of that which chanceth him by night, then
shall he go abroad out of the camp, he shall not come
11. within the camp: but it shall be, when evening cometh
on, he shall bathe himself in water: and when the sun
12. is down, he shall come within the camp. Thou shalt
have a place also without the camp, whither thou shalt
13. go forth abroad: and thou shalt have a paddle [1] among
thy weapons; [2] and it shall be, when thou sittest down
abroad, thou shalt dig therewith, and shalt turn back
14. and cover that which cometh from thee: for the LORD
thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp,[3] to deliver
thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; there-
fore shall thy camp be holy: that he see no unclean
thing [4] in thee,[5] and turn away from thee.

[1] m. *shovel.* [2] Gr. *thou shalt have a towel upon thy girdle.* [3] Sam. *camps.*
[4] m. Heb. *nakedness of any thing.* [5] SV *that he may not see an unclean thing in thee.*

ancient times when different spheres of life and different processes of nature had each its own appropriate god or demon. *Holiness* here means the same as ceremonial cleanness, and we have to admit that it is here construed in a somewhat external manner. In actual warfare it might be impossible to carry out such rules, but the author is concerned more with his idea of purity than with the actual demands of life. The origin of such laws is not in a sanitary idea, but in one that is religious, according to the ancient conception of religion.

9. **Evil thing**; anything improper and unsuited to the situation.

11. The same means of purification are enjoined in Lev. 15 : 16.

13. **Paddle**, RV marg., *shovel*. *Tent-pin* or *peg*, Judg. 4 : 21; *peg* or *nail*, Isa. 22 : 23; here an implement suitable for digging.

14. **Unclean thing**, RV m., *nakedness of anything, i.e.*, indecent thing, 24 : 1. Yahweh goes to and fro throughout the camp and must not be driven away by things that are repulsive.

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15. Thou shalt not deliver unto his master a servant
16. which is escaped from his master unto thee: he shall dwell with thee, in the midst of thee, in the place which he shall choose within one of thy gates, where it liketh him best: thou shalt not oppress him.
17. There shall be no harlot [1] of the daughters of Israel, neither shall there be a sodomite [2] of the sons of Israel.
18. Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore,[3] or the wages of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these are an abomination unto the LORD thy God.

[1] m. Heb. *kedeshah*. See Gen. 38: 21. SV *prostitute*. [2] m. Heb. *kadesh*. [3] SV harlot.

15. *Kindness must be shown to a Fugitive Slave;* 23: 15, 16

15. It is probable that this refers to an Israelite who had in some way become a slave to a foreign master; he is not to be given up, but, as he has no property, he is to be taken under the kindly patronage and protection of a brother Israelite. This law, which is peculiar to Deut., is quite in harmony with the general spirit of the book, which constantly seeks to cultivate a spirit of brotherliness in Israel, so that the nation may be strong in the virtue of social sympathy and mutual helpfulness. 1 Kgs. 2: 39 shows that the Philistines had no such law only on the supposition that the servants mentioned there were Philistines, which is not certain.

16. *Immoral Religious Usages Forbidden;* 23: 17, 18

17, 18. There shall be no sacred prostitutes in Israel. This prohibition is not directed against ordinary immorality, but against the impure practices that were common at Canaanite and Phœnician sanctuaries. Both men and women prostituted themselves in the service of the god of the shrine. The original meaning of the word *holy* or *consecrated* comes out strongly here as the Hebrew words for **harlot** and **sodomite** are the feminine and masculine forms of the word *holy*. The word in itself simply refers to the fact that these people were in some way set apart to the service of a god. The reward for their base conduct was given to the sanctuary. It is declared that Yahweh's temple must receive nothing from such a " tainted " source. **Dog** is a contemptuous

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19. Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother;
usury[1] of money, usury of victuals, usury of any
20. thing that is lent upon usury: unto a foreigner thou
mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou
shalt not lend upon usury: that the LORD thy God
may bless thee in all that thou puttest thine hand
unto, in the land whither thou goest in to pos-
sess it.
21. When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God,
thou shalt not be slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God
will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in

[1] SV has *interest* instead of *usury*.

name for the male prostitute, based upon the fact that the dog was regarded as a specially unclean animal. Cf. Rev. 22 : 15. For the O. T. allusions to this subject, see 1 Kgs. 14 : 24; 15 : 12; 22 : 46; Amos 2 : 7; Hos. 4 : 14; Jer. 3 : 2 ff. For Josiah's execution of the law, see 2 Kgs. 23 : 2 ff.

17. *Regulation of Usury;* 23 : 19, 20

19, 20. The Israelite must not take from his brother interest on loans. Compare Exod. 22 : 25 (JE), Lev. 25 : 36 f., and Ps. 15 : 5.

The word **usury**, which now means exhorbitant interest, means in the text simply interest. The taking of usury in the original sense is mentioned without blame in Matt. 25 : 27. If this could be regarded as a permanently valid command, it would stop business on any large scale among the Israelites. It is expressly stated that it is right to charge interest on money or goods lent to a foreigner. Hence this law ranks among those which were meant to promote the spirit of brotherly kindness within the nation; see 15 : 1–11. The loans meant were not those to be used for carrying on business and making profit, but small sums or loans in kind meant to tide over temporary distress.

18. *Laws regarding Vows;* 23 : 21–23

21–23. See an elaborate statement in Num. 30. See Eccles. 5 : 4 f.; Ps. 76 : 11. The place where the vows must be paid is clearly set forth in Chap. 12; here the point is faithfulness and

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22. thee. But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no
23. sin in thee. That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt observe and do; according as thou hast vowed unto the LORD thy God, a freewill offering, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.
24. When thou comest into thy neighbour's vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill at thine own pleasure; but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel.
25. When thou comest into thy neighbour's standing corn, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn.

24. When a man taketh a wife, and marrieth her, then it shall be, if she find no favour in his eyes, because he

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promptitude in the payment of them. There is no legislation on the subject in JE. On the ancient practice the following passages shed light: Gen. 28 : 20; Num. 21 : 2; Judg. 11 : 30; 1 Sam. 1 : 11; 2 Sam. 15 : 7. A vow is by its very nature a freewill offering; it is not prescribed for a man by any law, but prompted by his own feeling of gratitude or desire for help; therefore a man should be careful in making it but quick and scrupulous to carry it out when once made. The same spirit may be applied with profit to our promises and obligations.

19. *Regulating the Use of a Neighbor's Property for the Satisfaction of Hunger;* 23 : 24, 25

24, 25. This law, peculiar to Deut., recognizes that a man's property must not be stolen or wantonly destroyed, but it takes the position that a traveller passing through a field or vineyard may take that which is necessary for the satisfaction of present appetite. What he can really use at the moment should be allowed to him, but he must not reap it for himself or gather it into his basket. The law here formulated is said by travellers to be still in force in Palestine and Arabia. The criticism of the Pharisees against the disciples was based upon the idea that such plucking and rubbing of the ears of wheat as was necessary for this eating must be regarded as "work," and therefore as unlawful on the Sabbath day, Matt. 12 : 1 ff.; Mk. 2 : 23; Lk. 6 : 1 ff.

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hath found some unseemly thing in her, that he shall write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand,
2. and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's
Matt. 5:31; 19:7; Mk. 10:4
3. *wife*. And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house; or if the latter husband
4. die, which took her to be his wife; her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou[1] shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

[1] Sam. Gr. *ye*.

20. *Regulation of Divorce;* 24:1–4

1–4. The Hebrew codes imply the existence of divorce as an established custom; Deut. is the only one that contains any legislation on the subject; cf. Lev. 22:13; Num. 30:9. See also the quotation and application of this law in Jer. 3:1. The one regulation here is that when a divorced woman has been married again, she may not be taken back by her first husband; the reason is not stated, though the aim was, no doubt, to prevent the hasty dismissal of the wife. Deliberation is also secured by the need of executing a formal written deed. Probably this law is an advance on older custom. Cf. Hos. 3; 2 Sam. 3:13 ff. The earlier Jewish laws did not allow the woman any corresponding privilege.

1. The husband takes a dislike to his wife because of **some unseemly thing**, lit., *the nakedness of a thing* (23:14); probably immodest or indecent conduct is meant, not actual unchastity, which received a severe penalty, 22:21. The written formal document is referred to as a thing well known at this time.

2. On this point, see Matt. 5:32.

3. **Hate her**; on account of some fault or defect, as in v. 1.

4. The woman thus divorced and married to another man is "unclean" so far as her first husband is concerned, so that reunion would now be a deadly sin.

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III. Varied Laws mostly of a Humane Character; 24:5–25:4

5. When a man taketh a new wife, he shall not go
out in the host, neither shall he be charged with any
business: he shall be free at home one year, and shall
6. cheer his wife which he hath taken. No man shall
take the mill or the upper millstone to pledge: for
he taketh *a man's* life to pledge.
7. If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of
the children of Israel, and he deal with him [1] as a
slave,[1] or sell him; then that thief shall die: so shalt
thou put away the evil from the midst of thee.

[1] m. *as a chattel.*

1. *Privilege of the newly Married Man;* 24:5

5. Compare 20:7. He shall be free not only from war service but also from all public duties for one year that he may *rejoice with* his wife.

2. *The Mill not to be taken in Pledge;* 24:6

6. For similar regulations, see vs. 10–13. Such laws are meant to check harsh treatment of the poor. Amos 2:8; Prov. 22:27. Here it is stated that the hand-mill in whole or part is not to be taken in pledge because it is **a man's life**. The household mill for the daily grinding of the meal was indispensable, as each family had thus to provide its own flour. If the upper stone, called the rider, was taken away, the needful work was interrupted. Only those in great distress would attempt to pledge such a thing, and pity must be shown to them. There are many references in the Bible to this grinding at the mill, which was regarded as menial work and usually performed by women.

3. *Man-stealing Forbidden;* 24:7

7. This law is repeated from Exod. 21:16 (JE). It is quite in conformity with the spirit of Deut. that *man* in the earlier passage is replaced by the phrase **any of his brethren of the children of Israel**. In the Code of Hammurabi it is decreed that he who steals the son of a free man shall be put to death.

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8. Take heed in the plague of leprosy, that thou observe diligently, and do according to all[1] that the priests the Levites shall teach you: as I commanded
9. them, so ye shall observe to do. Remember what the LORD thy God did unto Miriam, by the way as ye came forth out of Egypt.
10. When thou dost lend thy neighbour any manner of loan, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his
11. pledge. Thou shalt stand without, and the man to whom thou dost lend shall bring forth the pledge
12. without unto thee. And if he be a poor man, thou
13. shalt not sleep with his pledge: thou shalt surely restore to him the pledge when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his garment, and bless thee:

[1] Sam. Gr. add *the law*.

4. *Treatment of Leprosy;* 24:8, 9

8–9. The case of leprosy is to be treated according to the prescriptions of the Levitical priests. No such prescriptions are given in JE, but in P the subject is treated quite elaborately, in two long chapters, Lev. 13:14. Probably such teaching existed before the time of Deut. if not in the exact form of those chapters. Here what is meant is *not*, beware of sinning lest ye be stricken with leprosy like Miriam, but rather, if you are stricken with leprosy follow the prescriptions of the priests, for this is required of all, even of the sister of Moses, Num. 12:14 f. The reason is that such prescriptions come from God for the help of his people. **Plague**, *touch* or *stroke*, 17:8; 21:5, — the physical sign of the dread disease.

5. *Rules regarding Pledges;* 24:10–13.

10–13. The first is peculiar to Deut. and decrees that the creditor must not enter the house of the debtor to select the pledge; the borrower must be allowed to bring forth something that he can spare. The second is found also in Exod. 22:25 f.; and ordains that if a poor man has pledged his garment it must be returned to him at sunset so that he can use it for covering at

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and it shall be righteousness unto thee before the LORD thy God.

14. Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are [1] in thy land [1] [2] within thy
15. gates: [2] in his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the LORD, and it be sin unto thee.
16. The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every [3] man shall be put to death for his own sin.

[1] Sam. Gr. om. [2] Gr. *in thy cities*. [3] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. *each* (with verb in sing., Heb. has pl. verb).

night. The following passages show that a garment was a not uncommon form of pledge, 24:17; Amos 2:8; Prov. 20:16; 27:13; Job 22:6. For the use of the mantle, cf. Exod. 12:34; Judg. 8:25; 1 Sam. 21:9. Merciful treatment of the poor is to be regarded as preëminently a good work.

6. *Consideration must be shown towards Hired Servants;* 24:14, 15

14, 15. Compare Lev. 19:13 (H). The man who works for a day's wage is poor, and so, as soon as he has finished his work, he should receive that which is due.

15. **In his day.** He must be paid promptly according to the proper standard, cf. Matt. 20:2 f. **Setteth his heart upon it,** lit., *lifteth up his soul to it;* then if he is disappointed he cries to heaven, to Yahweh, who is the guardian of the poor and oppressed.

7. *A Call for a Fuller Recognition of Individual Responsibility;* 24:16

16. A man should be put to death only for his own sin. This doctrine is preached as a revelation in Ezek. 18, and it is possible that this verse is dependent upon that chapter, though no doubt the feeling was growing in that direction in the time of Deut., cf. 7:10. The earlier view was that a man was so closely joined to his family and tribe that it was not unnatural for them to be

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17. Thou shalt not wrest the judgement of the stranger,
nor [1] of the fatherless; [2] nor take the widow's raiment
18. to pledge: [2] but thou shalt remember that thou wast
a bondman in [3] Egypt, and the LORD thy God re-
deemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do
this thing.
19. When thou reapest thine harvest in thy field, and
hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go
again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the
fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy
God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands.
20. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not
go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger,
21. for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou
gatherest *the grapes of* thy vineyard, thou shalt not
glean it after thee: it shall be for the stranger, for

[1] So Gr. Syr. Vg., Heb. om. [2] Some Gr. Mss. add *nor of the widow* and om. last clause. [3] Gr. adds *the land of*.

involved in a common punishment; cf. Josh. 7 : 24 f.; 2 Sam. 21 : 1–9; Dan. 6 : 24; Esther 9 : 13. This seems to have been the popular view in Israel down to a late time, Jer. 31 : 29; Ezek. 18 : 2. In 2 Kings 14 : 6 emphasis is laid upon the fact that Amaziah observed this law.

8. *Consideration demanded for the Needy;* 24 : 17–22

17–18. Compare Exod. 22 : 21 f., where the same three classes of people are mentioned as unprotected and liable to oppression. **Thou shalt not wrest the judgement**, cf. 16 : 19; Exod. 23 : 6. To **take the widow's raiment to pledge** is classed with other deeds of oppression, cf. Job. 24 : 3.

18. Practically the same as 15 : 15.

19–22. The gleanings are to be left for these needy people. Compare Lev. 19 : 9 f.; 23 : 22 (H). The law is meant to encourage a humane spirit and to guard against meanness.

19. **And hast forgot a sheaf.** This seems to point to the original form of the custom when that which had been unconsciously forgotten was left for the poor. The law then demanded that

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22. the fatherless, and for the widow. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

IV. Regulations of a Miscellaneous Character; 25:5–26:15

25. If there be a controversy between men, and they D
come unto judgement, and *the judges* judge them;
then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn
2. the wicked; and it shall be, if the wicked man be
worthy to be beaten, that the judge shall cause him
to lie down, and to be beaten before his face, accord-
3. ing to his wickedness, by number. Forty stripes he
may give him, he shall not exceed: lest, if he should

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something should be intentionally left for the poor. Still later the Jews discussed the question as to how much was to be so left. For the position of the gleaner see Ruth 2. If originally the last sheaf was left for a religious reason, all consciousness of the specific purpose has vanished.

9. *Regulation of Corporal Punishment;* 25:1–3

1–3. The use of corporal punishment was common and sometimes the results were fatal, cf. Exod. 21:20. See also Isa. 50:6; Jer. 20:2 f.; 37:15; Prov. 10:13, etc. This is the only place in the O. T. where it is authorized and regulated; its two provisions are meant to guard against excessive severity; the punishment shall take place in the presence of the judge who is responsible for the sentence, and the number of stripes shall be limited to forty. Later usage made this thirty-nine to lessen the danger of going beyond the prescribed number, cf. 2 Cor. 11:24.

1. **Judgement**, *i.e.* the place of judgment. **Justify and condemn**, in the legal sense to acquit and declare guilty.

2. **Worthy to be beaten**, lit., *a son of beating*. **According to his wickedness**. This suggests that the number of stripes are to be in proportion to the gravity of the offence, but that the maximum is forty.

3. **Seem vile unto thee**, *i.e.* be dishonored. On the word see 27:16. Not the corporal punishment in itself is regarded as

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exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes,
then thy brother should seem vile unto thee.

1 Cor. 9 : 9; 1 Tim. 5 : 18

4. Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out [1] *the corn.*[1]

5. If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no son,[2] the wife of the dead[3] shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall

Matt. 22 : 24; Mk. 12 : 19; Lk. 20 : 28

[1] SV grain. [2] Gr. *seed.* [3] SV *shall not be married.*

degrading but the excessive amount; a man has some dignity of nature; he must not be treated as a vile worthless thing.

10. *Oxen not to be muzzled when at Work threshing the Corn;* 25 : 4

4. This method of threshing by the treading of the oxen is still in use in Eastern lands, and as a rule they are left unmuzzled. The writer of Deut. believed that kindness should be shown to animals; while it is clear that the principle that "the labourer is worthy of his hire" may be applied to all classes of workers, it is also clear that the writer of this verse was not thinking of the support of the priests or ministers. Compare 1 Cor. 9 : 9; 1 Tim. 5 : 18.

1. *The Law of Levirate-Marriage;* 25 : 5–10

5–10. This form of marriage, so-called from the Latin, *levir*, brother-in-law, existed among many ancient peoples. Its precise origin is uncertain; it may have a remote connection with ancestor worship or other primitive ideas and customs which were forgotten when the law took its present form. Long after ancestor worship had passed away the feeling was strong in Israel that it was a great calamity and in a sense a disgrace for a man to leave no one to perpetuate his name, Gen. 38. Here the custom is modified; it applies only to brothers dwelling together on the same family estate, and it is no longer absolutely binding. There are different ways of explaining the relationship of the present passage to Lev. 18 : 16; 20 : 21; probably these prohibitions refer to such marriages when the brother is still alive. Matt. 20 : 23 f., and parallel passages show that the custom continued long after the time of Deut.

5. **Son** is no doubt to be taken literally though Gr. has *seed* and Matt. 22 : 24, *child*. The stranger is a man belonging to another family or clan; marriage with him would divide the estate and

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go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her.
6. And it shall be, that the firstborn [1] which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not blotted out of Israel.
7. And if the man like not to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of an husband's brother unto
8. me. Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and if he stand, and say, I like not
9. to take her; then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face; and she shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto the man
10. that doth not build up his brother's house. And his name shall be called in Israel, the house of him that hath his shoe loosed.

[1] Sam. adds *son*.

this is if possible to be avoided. **Perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her.** The Hebrew has a special verb, a technical term for this conduct; showing that it is a question of an ingrained custom.

6. It was a regular marriage in which only the firstborn was reckoned as the son of the dead brother, bearing his name and becoming his heir.

7. For a similar scene though slightly different in its significance see Ruth 4; there Boaz purchases the woman and redeems the estate.

9. The man who declines this honorable duty lays himself open to contemptuous treatment. The drawing off of the shoe by the woman suggests a shameful giving up of the rights and duties of his position, Ruth 4: 7. The spitting expresses bitter scorn, Num. 12: 14; Isa. 50: 6; Job 30: 10.

10. He who will not build up his brother's house shall have a

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11. When men strive together one with another, and
the wife of the one draweth near for to deliver her
husband out of the hand of him that smiteth him,
and putteth forth her hand, and taketh him by the
12. secrets: then thou shalt cut off her hand, thine eye
shall have no pity.
13. Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a
14. great and a small. Thou shalt not have in thine
15. house divers measures, a great and a small. A per-
fect and just weight shalt thou have; a perfect and
just measure shalt thou have: that thy days may
be long upon[1] the land which the LORD thy God

[1] SV *in* instead of *upon*.

scornful name clinging to his own house, viz. the house of the *barefooted one*, *i.e.* one who like a "tramp" has no respect for social duties.

2. *An Immodest Action on the Part of the Woman is to be visited with Severe Punishment;* 25 : 11, 12

11, 12. Apart from "the law of like" (19 : 21) this is the only place where the law requires bodily mutilation as a punishment. In the Code of Hammurabi there are several cases of punishment by cutting off the offending member, *e.g.* the hand of the son that struck his father, etc. This is treated as a typical case of immodesty; behind the extreme severity there may be some primitive religious reason no longer discernible.

3. *Demand for Just Weights and Measures;* 25 : 13–16

13–16. Honesty in commerce is required as well as firmness in the administration of justice. For the latter see 16 : 18–20. With this demand compare Amos 8 : 5; Mic. 6 : 10 f. Parallel is Lev. 19 : 35 f. (H); Ezek. 45 : 10.

13. **Divers weights**, lit., a *stone and a stone*, *i.e.* two different stones, a large one for buying with and a small one for selling. These might be carried about in a bag.

14. **Divers measures**, *lit.*, an *ephah and an ephah*, two different ephahs. The large measure, about a bushel, kept in the house.

15. For the promise see 5 : 16.

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16. giveth thee. For all that do such things, *even* all
that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the
LORD thy God.
17. Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way
18. as ye[1] came forth out of Egypt; how he met thee by
the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, all that
were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and
19. weary; and he feared not God. Therefore it shall
be, when the LORD thy God hath given thee rest from
all thine enemies round about, in the land which the
LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to pos-
sess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of
Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget.
26. And it shall be, when thou art come in unto the D

[1] Gr. Vg. *thou (camest forth)*.

16: The final half of this verse is found in 18:12; 22:5; the second in Lev. 19:15–35 (H).

4. *The Amalekites must be exterminated;* 25:17–19

17–19. The reason for this is that when Israel came out of Egypt the Amalekites hampered their movements and cut off the stragglers; this statement should be compared with Ex. 17, where the battle with Amalek is recorded, but this particular incident is *not* mentioned; when Deut. was written Amalek had ceased to be a formidable enemy, 1 Sam. 14:48; 15:27: 28; 30:17.

18. Amalek cut off the rear all that were compelled to fall behind on account of weariness, thus showing by his lack of humanity that he feared not God.

19. When Israel has gained a secure position then final and complete vengeance is to be inflicted on these enemies. In such a case the children would suffer for the sins of the fathers. Compare 24:16.

5. *Liturgy to be used at the Presentation of the First Fruits and Tithes;* 26:1–15

1–15. Two forms of confession and thanksgiving. These verses have a special interest as they give us specimens of ancient

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land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein;

2. that thou shalt take of the first of all[1] the fruit of the ground, which thou shalt bring in from thy land that the LORD thy God giveth thee; and thou shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy[2] God shall choose to cause his name

D[R] 3. to dwell there. And thou shalt come unto the priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto the LORD thy God, that I am come unto the land which the LORD sware unto our fathers for[3] to give us.

4. And the priest shall take the basket out of thine hand, and set it down before the altar of the LORD

[1] Sam. Gr. om. *all.* [2] Gr. *my.* [3] SV om.

liturgical literature in which the lofty Hebrew faith concerning God's guidance in history and blessing in nature is manifested in the form of prayerful confession and grateful adoration. These make a suitable conclusion to the legislation, seeing that they show in forms of living worship the performance of laws already given, 18:4; 16:9–12. The first prescribes a form of prayer to be used at the annual offering of the first fruits, 1–12; the second gives a confession and prayer to be offered in connection with the presentation of the triennial tithe. The exact relationship of the first-fruits and tithes is doubtful; this chapter is concerned with the manner of their presentation rather than their final use.

1. Nearly the same as 17:14.

2. **Of the first**, lit., *some of the first*, the expression in v. 10 differs in not having the partitive particle, see 12:6; 18:4. The word for basket is found again only in v. 4, 28:5, 17.

3. **The priest**, *i.e.* the chief priest, at the central sanctuary; for the form of expression, see 17:9; 19:17. **Profess**, *i.e. declare.* The individual worshipper makes profession of faith in the God of his fathers; the promises of the past have received rich fulfilment. This verse and the next may be an amplification meant to guard the rights of the priest, compare v. 10, where the worshipper himself appears to deposit the basket before Yahweh.

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5. thy God. And thou shalt answer and say before the D
LORD thy God, A Syrian[1] ready to perish[2] was my
father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned
there, few in number; and he became there a nation,
6. great,[3] mighty, and populous: and the Egyptians
evil entreated us,[4] and afflicted us, and laid upon us
7. hard bondage: and we cried unto the LORD, the God
of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice, and
saw our affliction, and our toil, and our oppression:
8. and the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a
mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and
with great terribleness, and with signs, and with
9. wonders: and he hath brought us into this place,
and hath given us this land, a land flowing with milk
10. and honey. And now, behold, I have brought the

[1] m. Heb. *Aramean.* [2] m. *wandering* or *lost.* Gr. reads *my father abandoned (lost) Syria,* etc. [3] Sam. Vg. Tar. add *and;* Gr. reads *became a mighty nation and a great multitude.* [4] SV *dealt ill with us.*

5. Now there begins a more specific statement of God's merciful care and strong protection manifested in the peculiar history of this people. A **Syrian** (or Aramean, m.): the reference is to Jacob, whose ancestors came from Syria, and who himself fled there from the anger of his brother and who in his old age went down to Egypt and was in the position of a "sojourner" there; Gen. 24: 4–10; 47: 4. **Ready to perish**, or perishing, may also be translated as in the margin, *wandering.* In the former case the reference would be to the danger from which Jacob fled; in the latter, to his adventure, as a traveller in a strange land, building up his fortunes by hard toil. The brief historical review here given is based upon the statements of the earlier narratives and uses expressions of which the Deuteronomic writer is fond.

7. Deliverance was given in answer to prayer; the thought of sorrow as a means of driving men to a sense of dependence upon their God is one that plays a great part in these narratives.

9. This is not mere imaginative forecast; there moves through the statement a sense of patriotic pride and gratitude which comes from actual possession of the land and knowledge of its varied history and rich fruitfulness.

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first of the fruit of the ground, which thou, O LORD, hast given me. And thou shalt set it down before the LORD thy God, and worship before the LORD thy
11. God: and thou shalt rejoice in all the good which the LORD thy God hath given unto thee,[1] and unto thine house, thou,[1] and the Levite, and the stranger that is in the midst of thee.
12. When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithe of thine increase in the third year, [2]which is the year of tithing,[2] then thou shalt give it unto the Levite, to the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be
13. filled; and thou shalt say before the LORD thy God, I have put away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and [3] unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandment [4] which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed any of thy
14. commandments, neither have I forgotten them: I

[1] Gr. *thou and thine houses*, etc. [2] Gr. om. and reads *thou shalt give the second tenth to the Levite.* [3] Sam. Tar. om. *and.* [4] Sam. Gr. Syr. *commandments* (pl.).

10. Compare with v. 3.

12–15. Confession to be made at the offering of the tithe. For the law of tithe, see 14: 28, where it is ordained that this triennial tithe is to be used for charitable purposes at the home of its giver. To bring the present command into relation with that law we must suppose that this form of confession and thanksgiving is to be used by the worshipper on such occasions, but the phrase **before Yahweh thy God** in the next verse would in this book be most naturally interpreted of a prayer offered at the central sanctuary in connection with the offerings presented there, at one of the pilgrimage-festivals, 16: 13.

13. **I have put away the hallowed things.** The tithe is thus spoken of because it has been consecrated or set apart by a divine command, 14: 28. For a time it remained in the house of the owner, but now it has been conscientiously cleared out and devoted to its proper purposes.

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have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I put away thereof, being unclean, nor given thereof for the dead: I have hearkened to the voice of the LORD my God, I have done according to all that
15. thou hast commanded me. Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the ground which thou hast given us, as thou swarest unto our fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey.

V. EXHORTATIONS TO OBEY THE LAW JUST GIVEN; 26 : 16–28 : 68

16. This day the LORD thy God commandeth thee to do these statutes and judgements: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

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14. While in the house of the owner this tithe might have been rendered unclean in various ways, but the worshipper declares that care has been taken to prevent this. The different forms of contamination mentioned are (1) by the eating of it in mourning; mourning bread (Hos. 9 : 4) is unclean, for death and the customs surrounding it retained much of primitive superstition; (2) by the person who put it away being ceremonially unclean such "uncleanness" was regarded as contagious, Hag. 2 : 13; (3) by sending gifts of food to a funeral feast or making offerings to the dead, Jer. 16 : 7; Ezek. 24 : 17. When the Hebrew teachers were coming to the full consciousness of the supremacy of their God they protested vigorously against all survivals from ancient polytheism.

15. On the basis of past faithfulness the worshipper claims continued mercy from the God who from heaven has sent such rich blessings upon the land.

1. *The Formula of Obligation to the Law;* 26 : 16–19

16–19. Concluding exhortation to observe the whole law.

16. These words are a formula of obligation for the day when the Law was given; compare the statement in 2 Kgs. 23 : 3.

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17. Thou hast avouched the LORD this day to be thy God, and that thou shouldest walk in his ways, and keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his
18. judgements, and hearken unto his voice; and the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be a [1] peculiar people unto himself,[1] as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments;
19. and to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, [2] in praise, and in name, and in honour; [2] and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the LORD thy God, as he hath spoken.

D[R] 27. And Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people,[3] saying, Keep all the commandment which I

[1] SV a people for his own possession. [2] m. *for a praise, and for a name, and for an honour.* [3] Gr. om. *the people.*

17. **Avouched**, lit., *caused to say*, a peculiar form of expression which occurs only here. It comes from the nature of the covenant looked upon as a two-sided transaction; each party assumes certain duties and obligations which are expected, relied upon by the other, so that each one entering into the mutual contract may be said *to cause the other to say* that which is implied in the action. The writer does not mean to overlook the fact that the covenant originates in Yahweh's electing grace. They have passed beyond the view of mere natural relationship between God and the people; it is a bond of living faith and moral obligation, mercy on the one side and obedience on the other. It is possible that the original order was as follows: *Thou hast caused Yahweh to say that he would be thy God, and that he would raise thee high above all peoples*, etc. *Yahweh hath caused thee to say this day that thou wouldest be a peculiar people unto himself, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments, and that thou shouldest walk in his ways*, etc.

19. Israel has not only been created by Yahweh, but has also received a position of higher privilege and responsibility than that of the rest of the nations. History has justified this claim; a wide survey of facts shows that there is in it an abiding truth which should not be ignored because it has so often been presented in narrow fanatical forms.

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2. command you this day. And it shall be on the day
when ye shall pass over Jordan[1] unto the land which
the LORD thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set
thee up great stones, and plaister them with plaister:
3. and thou shalt write upon them all the words of this

[1] SV *the Jordan.*

2. *Composite Chapter of a Special Character;* 27 : 1–26

Chap. 27. Various commands to be observed after the people have crossed the Jordan. This chapter is peculiar in its character and position, it interrupts the speech of Moses, has no close relation to the specific Deuteronomic material, and is evidently a reworking of older narratives and laws. While the critical problems that it raises cannot be completely settled, it is interesting and instructive, and shows how carefully such literary fragments were preserved, and how gradually the liturgical forms and responsive services were worked out. We have in it a command to inscribe the law on great stones and to set up an altar, a brief exhortation given to the people by Moses and the priests, a statement that the different tribes are to stand to bless and to curse on Mts. Gerizim and Ebal, then a series of curses simply. It is probable that the first section, vs. 1–8, contains the account of two different things,—the setting up of large stones with inscriptions immediately after the passage of the Jordan, and the erection of an altar on Mt. Ebal,—which have been blended together.

(*a*) An altar to be built and inscriptions to be set up; 27 : 1–10.

1. **And the elders of Israel.** Elsewhere in Deut. Moses alone gives the commands to the people; as the verb is in the singular in the first half of the verse, Moses alone speaks in the second half, and the Greek omits *the people*, the original form may have represented the command as given by Moses to the elders, 31 : 9.

2. **On the day when,** etc. This is probably to be taken literally, and in that case the distance between Ebal and the Jordan is ignored. See 11 : 29 ff. The great stones are to plaistered with white lime and then an inscription painted or written thereon in black or colored letters. This was an Egyptian method to paint or plaister stones and then inscribe upon them figures or characters using a black pigment of durable quality. It was a common custom in other ancient countries to engrave laws or ceremonial regulations on slabs of stone or metal.

3. **This law.** Possibly the foregoing chapters, 6–26, but more

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law, when thou art passed over; that thou mayest go in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of thy fathers, hath promised thee.

4. And it shall be when ye are passed over Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in mount Ebal,[1] and thou shalt plaister

JE 5. them with plaister. And there shalt thou build an altar unto the LORD thy God, an altar of stones:

6. thou shalt lift up no iron *tool* upon them. Thou shalt build the altar of the LORD thy God of unhewn[2] stones: and thou shalt offer burnt offerings thereon

D[E] 7. unto the LORD thy God: and thou shalt sacrifice peace offerings, and shalt eat there: and thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God.

[1] Sam. Gerizim. [2] Heb. *whole*.

likely the legislation contained in 12–26. It was necessary to have a permanent record that the revelation of God and the work of great teachers might be preserved, Isa. 8:1; 30:8. Further progress in the conquest of the land is here made dependent upon obedience to the law already given.

4. **Ebal**: the Samaritan version has Gerizim. This change has no doubt been made deliberately in honor of their own sacred mountain. See 11:29; Josh. 4:20. The stones thus set up shall serve as a memorial of Yahweh's loving kindness to the coming generations, Josh. 4:6.

5–7. This information is probably derived from the earlier narrative of E, since Deut. does not recognize any altar save the one at the place which Yahweh shall choose, *i.e.* Jerusalem. This altar is to be built according to the ancient law of Exod. 20:25, JE; the stone must be in its natural condition, untouched by any instrument used by man. Such stones are found at primitive sanctuaries; they were regarded as dwelling places of the God and later as signs of the divine presence, Gen. 28:18. It is likely that there was such a sanctuary at Ebal in early times, 11:29.

7. **Peace offerings** occurs along with the **burnt offerings** in Exod. 20:24, but the term does not occur elsewhere in Deut.;

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8. And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.
9. And Moses and the priests the Levites spake unto D
all Israel, saying, Keep silence, and hearken, O Israel; this day thou art become the people of the LORD
10. thy God. Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the LORD thy God, and do his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day.
11. And Moses charged the people the same day, saying, JE
12. These shall stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the

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the word "sacrifice" being used in its place, 12 : 6, 11, 27; 18 : 3. The general tone of the verse, however, in its call for feasting and rejoicing before God is quite in the Deuteronomic style and spirit. The two kinds of sacrifice commanded here are frequently mentioned together, Judg. 20 : 26; 21 : 5; 1 Sam. 10 : 8; 2 Sam. 6 : 17; 1 Kgs. 3 : 15.

8. The inscription is to be written, with all possible clearness, upon the stones referred to in vs. 2, 4, not upon the stones of the altar described in 5, 6.

9, 10. These verses have no connection with what has gone before or with those that follow immediately after, but in speech and sentiment they join very closely with 28 : 1; and it is possible that in the original Deuteronomy they formed the link connecting the two related chapters 26 and 28. Because Israel has entered into a covenant with Yahweh (26 : 17) and thus become a peculiar people, therefore loyal obedience to the divine commands may reasonably be expected. The Hebrews were an emotional people, they invested these religious transactions with a solemn magnificence; but they were also a practical people who acknowledged that the final outcome of a true covenant must be surrender on their part to the will of their God. This was always clear, but the advance made through the influence of great teachers was in gaining, under the divine guidance, a purer and loftier idea of the moral nature of this obedience, Hos. 6 : 6; Ps. 40 : 6.

9. Though the priests, the Levites, are included, it appears from the next verse that Moses was the speaker. **Keep silence**: the Hebrew word used occurs only here; the proper attitude in the presence of a divine message is a reverent silence, Hab. 2 : 20; Zech. 2 : 13.

(*b*) The blessings and curses on Ebal and Gerizim; cf. 27 : 11–26, 11–13. This passage also belongs to one of the earlier records, as

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people, when ye are passed over Jordan; Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Ben-
13. jamin: and these shall stand upon mount Ebal for the curse; Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan,
D[8] 14. and Naphtali. And the Levites shall answer, and say unto all the men of Israel with a loud voice.
15. Cursed be the man that maketh a graven or molten image, an abomination unto the LORD, the work of the

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Levi is here not an ecclesiastical class but a secular tribe alongside the other tribes. Compare 33 : 8 with Gen. 49 : 5. In 11 : 29 it is said that the blessing is to be set on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal, and the meaning of this blessing and curse is explained in 11 : 26, as referring to obedience and disobedience of the Law. It appears to be meant that in a solemn ceremony six tribes shall stand on one mount and six on the other, uttering respectively the blessings and the curses. The principle upon which this division of the tribes is made is not clear, it does not seem to be geographical; it has been pointed out that on the side of the curse are those of inferior birth, along with Reuben who forfeited his birthright, Gen. 49 : 4. In Josh. 8 : 33 ff. we have an account by a Deuteronomic writer of the carrying out of this command by Joshua, who is represented as following carefully in the footsteps of his great master. The permanent idea is that God's blessing rests on obedience to the law of righteousness, while the curse follows the steps of the wilful transgressor. Here, in the following paragraph, we have only the curses.

14–26. Twelve curses, corresponding to the number of tribes, are pronounced by the Levites against certain forms of transgression. Here the Levites are priests standing over against the people who respond to their utterances. In the previous paragraph the two halves of the nation are set opposite each other. The curses here are not chosen with any special reference to the Deuteronomic Law. It is likely that we have here a selection from an old liturgy that has been preserved by its insertion in this book.

14. **Levites.** The priests or inferior clergy, 10 : 8. Compare the work of the Levites in Neh. 8. **Answer** has here the sense of "begin to speak" as in 21 : 7.

15. **Cursed.** This word may have many shades of significance, which can only be determined by a careful investigation of all the passages involved; but it is well to remember that to the an-

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hands of the craftsman, and setteth it up in secret. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen.

16. Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen.

17. Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour's landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen.

18. Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way. And all the people shall say, Amen.

19. Cursed be he that wresteth [1]the judgement of the stranger,[1] fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen.

[1] SV the justice *due* to the sojourner.

cients blessings and curses uttered under strong provocation or in solemn circumstances were *real* things carrying in themselves their beneficent or fatal effect. Here it is a strong expression of divine disapproval of these particular acts which all the more were to be condemned because the covenant had been thus solemnly ratified by the people. **Amen**, lit., *firm, assured;* as a strong expression of assent, *certainly, truly,* 1 Kgs. 1 : 36; Jer. 11 : 5; in a liturgical formula, Num. 5 : 22; as a response of the people, Neh. 8 : 6. For the prohibition against making images, 4 : 16; 23; 25; Exod. 29 : 4–23; 34 : 17; Lev. 19 : 4; 26 : 1. Secret idolatry, Job 31 : 27.

16. **Setteth light by**, *i.e. dishonoureth*, a weaker form of the same verb used in Ex. 21 : 17; Lev. 20 : 9 (curseth), the opposite of the word honor used in the fifth commandment. Reverence for parents or filial piety is one of the most prominent features of Hebrew religion. If ever they practised ancestor worship, they have by the teaching of inspired prophets been saved from the stagnation that often comes from such idolatry of the past, and have preserved only the best element, viz. the true respect that is due from youth to age, 5 : 16; 21 : 18–21; Exod. 20 : 12; 21 : 17; Lev. 20 : 9.

17. One of the prohibitions peculiar to Deut.; see on 19 : 14.

18. **Maketh . . . to wander out of the way** or *causeth to go astray in the way*, Prov. 28 : 10. This prohibition is found only here and Lev. 19 : 14. Only those destitute of real kindly feeling would take advantage of such infirmities.

19. See 24 : 17; Exod. 22 : 21–24; 23 : 9; Lev. 19 : 33. A

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20. Cursed be he that lieth with his father's wife; because he hath uncovered his father's skirt. And all the people shall say, Amen.

21. Cursed be he that lieth with any manner of beast. And all the people shall say, Amen.

22. Cursed be he that lieth with his sister, the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen.

23. Cursed be he that lieth with his mother in law. And all the people shall say, Amen.

24. Cursed be he that smiteth his neighbour in secret. And all the people shall say, Amen.

25. Cursed be he that taketh reward[1] to slay an innocent person. And all the people shall say, Amen.

Gal. 3 : 10 26. Cursed be he that confirmeth not[2] the words of

[1] SV *a bribe.* [2] Sam. Gr. add *all.*

solemn demand for civic justice and social virtue. The Deuteronomic Law takes under its care the unprotected classes.

20. Prohibition of marriage with step-mother, 22 : 30; Lev. 18 : 8; 20 : 11.

21. See Exod. 22 : 19; Lev. 18 : 23; 20 : 15.

22. Marriage with a half-sister prohibited. See Lev. 18 : 9; 20 : 17; and compare Gen. 29 : 12; 2 Sam. 13 : 13. According to Ezekiel, who condemns this kind of marriage, it was practised in his day. See Ezek. 22 : 11. The ancient custom is explained by the fact that relationship on the father's side was not looked upon as so close as that on the mother's side.

23. This prohibition is not found in the Deuteronomic Law. See Lev. 18 : 17; 20 : 14.

24. Even if the murderer escapes the grasp of human justice, the curse of God is upon him. Exod. 29 : 13; 21 : 12; Lev. 24 : 17. **In secret:** 13 : 7; 28 : 57.

25. Cursed are those who received bribes for slaying the innocent. Taking bribes is denounced by the prophets and condemned in the Law, but the nearest parallel to this passage is Ezek. 22 : 12; "in thee have they taken bribes to shed blood."

26. This law refers probably to the Deuteronomic legislation, an adaptation of the liturgy to its present situation. Those

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this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen.

28. And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken D diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments which I com-

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who do not confirm, lit., *cause to stand up*, or give effect to this law have the curse of heaven resting upon them.

3. *The Blessings and Curses which follow upon Obedience and Disobedience; Chap. 28*

Chap. 28. A powerful speech setting forth the blessings and curses which follow upon obedience and disobedience to the Law. This chapter, which is printed in the text as two paragraphs, of unequal length, may be called a great sermon in favor of loyal obedience to the Law which has now been given; it has been named the "Peroration to the Deuteronomic Legislation." It joins on quite well to v. 10 of the previous chapter. It should be noted that the other codes of JE and P have each a similar conclusion. Exod. 23 : 20–33 and Lev. 26 : 3–45. A certain number of verses present in similar forms the blessings and curses; then the curses and misfortunes are developed at greater length in a series of striking pictures. As the part devoted to the curses is of so much greater length, it may have received later additions; such a statement as this was peculiarly liable to be enriched by fuller experience in days when thoughtful students of the Word felt that the nation was suffering from the accumulated mistakes and misdoings of the past. The whole speech, however, breathes a oneness of spirit and is marked by a massive strength and unity; intelligently interpreted, it is still the kind of sermon that is very much needed. To us the Law of God is not the ceremonial law of Moses, but the highest teaching of the O. T. concerning social righteousness, the latest revelations of science, and the call of our Lord Jesus to the noblest human service. In this large sense we may appropriate the blessings and curses of the olden time; the nation that cherishes within its borders the real spirit of brotherhood and is ready to bear a fair share of the world's burden of sorrow and need shall be exalted to true peace and prosperity.

(*a*) 1–14. The blessings of obedience. Compare similar statements in 7 : 12–16; 11 : 13–15, 22–25.

1. **And it shall come to pass** — the connection is with 26 : 19

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mand thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set
2. thee on high above all the nations of the earth: and all
these blessings shall come upon thee, and overtake
thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD
thy God.
3. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt
4. thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy
body, and the fruit of thy ground, and [1]the fruit of
thy cattle,[1] the increase of thy kine, and the young
5. of thy flock. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy
6. kneadingtrough. Blessed shalt thou be when thou
comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest
7. out. The LORD shall cause thine enemies that
rise up against thee to be smitten before thee: they
shall come out against thee one way, and shall
8. flee before thee seven ways. The LORD shall com-

[1] Gr. om., SV *beasts* for *cattle* and *cattle* for *kine*.

or 27:10. **Set thee on high.** See 26:19. This promise has been, in the spiritual sense, abundantly fulfilled; but in its original form it is one that was liable to be misapplied by zealots who had a narrow view of the Law.

2. **Come upon thee, and overtake thee.** This is more than what we call poetic personification; the blessings and curses are regarded as living agents of God's justice which follow on the track of the individual and the nation. This is the ancient equivalent of our modern idea of inexorable law.

3. Here we have six clauses beginning with the word "Blessed," and promising, as a result of obedience, prosperity in every sphere of the nation's life.

4. **The fruit of thy cattle.** This phrase has probably come in here from v. 18; it is lacking in one important Greek Ms., and in v. 18. On the rest of the verse, see the note on 7:13.

5. There is no scarcity. The **basket** for gathering the fruit and the **kneadingtrough** for making the bread shall be always full.

6. The army of the enemy advances against them in an orderly march, but, being repulsed, flees wildly in all possible directions, Exod. 25:32; Lev. 26:7.

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mand the blessing upon thee in thy barns, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God
9. giveth thee. The LORD shall establish thee for an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee; if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD
10. thy God, and walk in his ways. And all the peoples of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of
11. the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee. And the LORD shall make thee plenteous for good, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD sware
12. unto thy fathers to give thee. The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure[1] the heaven to give the rain of thy land in its season, and[2] to bless all the work of thine hand:[3] and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

[1] m. *treasury*. [2] Sam. Gr. om. *and*. [3] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. *hands*.

8. Lit., *may Yahweh command his blessing with thee*, etc. The same tone of energetic desire probably runs through the following verses.

9. **Holy people**, see 7:6; 14:2; 26:19. The general condition in v. 1 is here taken up indirectly. *Seeing that* thou wilt keep the commandment, etc.

10. **That thou art called by the name of Yahweh**: better, *that Yahweh's name is called over thee*. The meaning of this comes out clearly from such a passage as 2 Sam. 12:28, where Joab says, "Lest I take the city and *my name be called over it*." Yahweh claims to be the owner and protector of this people, and as he is the Lord of heaven and earth men will be afraid of attacking his property.

11. He will make thee enjoy prosperity in an excessive degree. See vs. 11 and 18.

12. According to the antique view, Yahweh kept the rain, hail, and snow in his storehouses above the firmament, Gen. 1:7; 17:11; Jer. 10:13; Job 38:22. Because of the abundance

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13. And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the
tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not
be beneath; if thou shalt hearken unto the command-
ments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee
14. this day, to observe and to do *them;* and shalt not turn
aside from any of the words which I command you[1]
this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after
other gods to serve them.
15. But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken
unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do
all his commandments and his statutes which I com-
mand thee this day; that all these curses shall come
16. upon thee, and overtake thee. Cursed shalt thou be
in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.
17. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy kneadingtrough.
18. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of
thy ground, the increase of thy kine, and the young of
19. thy flock. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in,
20. and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The
LORD shall send upon thee cursing,[2] discomfiture, and
rebuke, in all that thou puttest thine hand unto for
to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. *thee.* [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. Tar. Vg. add *and.*

of produce Israel will have wealth to lend to other nations; cf. 15 : 6; Ps. 37 : 26.

13. Therefore Israel will take a prominent position among the nations and will rise continually in reputation and influence. For the figure, see Isa. 9 : 14.

14. Read with Sam. Gr. AV, *I command thee.*

(*b*) 15–68. Curses come as the result of disobedience. The forms used to express the curses in 16–19 correspond exactly to those used for the blessings in 3–6.

20. Very emphatic, these three things; cursing, discomfort, and rebuke are regarded as living agents of the divine vengeance. The second half of the verse has a peculiar change of person,

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quickly; because of the evil of thy doings, whereby
21. thou hast forsaken me. The LORD shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest in to possess
22. it. The LORD shall smite thee with consumption, and with fever, and with inflammation, and with fiery heat, and with the sword,[1] and with blasting, and with mildew, and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.
23. And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass,
24. and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou
25. be destroyed. The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and shalt flee seven ways before them: and thou shalt be[2] tossed to and fro among[2] all
26. the kingdoms of the earth. And thy carcase shall be

[1] m. and Vg. *drought.* [2] m. *a terror unto.*

forsaken *me*, and a word *doings*, which is common in Jeremiah and occurs here only in Deut., hence it may be an addition.

21. **Pestilence**, an epidemic disease causing widespread destruction.

22. The curse is for the sake of impressiveness presented in sevenfold form; the calamities will fall upon the earth and its inhabitants. **With the sword**: it suits the connection better to follow the translation of the margin *with drought;* in the original the two forms are similar.

23. The curse will rest upon the heavens so that they cannot give rain upon the earth, and, lacking this stimulus, it cannot bring forth fruit, Lev. 26 : 19.

24. Instead of a fructifying rain there will be showers of fine dust caused by the hot desert wind, the sirocco.

25. The curse is expressed even more strongly than the blessing of v. 7. **Tossed to and fro among**, better with the margin, a *terror unto*, *i.e.* an object of terror, a sight causing shuddering and dread.

26–37. Probably an expansion with illustrations from the Exile.

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meat unto all[1] fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of
the earth, and there shall be none to fray them away.
27. The LORD shall smite thee with the boil of Egypt,
and with the emerods,[2] and with the scurvy, and with
28. the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed. The LORD
shall smite thee with madness, and with blindness, and
29. with astonishment of heart: and thou shalt grope at
noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou
shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only
oppressed and spoiled alway, and there shall be none
30. to save thee. Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another
man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house, and
thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vine-
31. yard, and shalt not use the fruit thereof. Thine ox
shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat
thereof: thine ass shall be violently taken away from
before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee: thy
sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt
32. have none to save thee. Thy sons and thy daughters
shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. om. *all.* [2] m. *tumours* or *plague boils.*

26. To feel the force of this we must remember that in those days the lack of an honorable burial was regarded as in itself a terrible curse and deprivation, 2 Sam. 21 : 10.

27. Various forms of skin diseases, swellings, and eruptions of an incurable kind, regarded as a special curse of God; see the case of Job.

28. The result of all these ills will be mental confusion, destroying all hope, ending in perplexity and panic.

29. A striking picture of utter helplessness and hopelessness, Isa. 59 : 10. Though they grope about after many ways, all ways shall lead to ruin.

30–34. After this comprehensive statement here are particular features of suffering which come to those who are conquered by a cruel enemy. A man's house and wife were taken from him, the produce of his fields consumed by strangers, and his children

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look, and fail with longing for them all the day: and
there shall be nought in the power of thine hand.[1]
33. The fruit of thy ground, and all thy labours, shall a
nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt
34. be only oppressed and crushed alway: so that thou
shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou
35. shalt see. The LORD shall smite thee in the knees, and
in the legs, with a sore boil, whereof thou canst not be
healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the crown of thy
36. head. The LORD shall[2] bring thee, and thy king
which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which
thou hast not known, thou nor thy fathers; and there
shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone. And
37. thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a
byword, among all the peoples whither the LORD shall
lead thee away.
38. Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and D

[1] Syr. *hands*. [2] SV substitutes *will* for *shall* several times in this chapter.

sold into slavery. If we would realize how horrible war was in those days, and how much we ought to be grateful for the blessings of peace, we need only note the varied features of this terrible picture, a picture drawn from sad experience. All these things take place before a man's eyes, so that he is led to think that those who are dead received the better part.

34. No wonder the survivors who live through all this are maddened and driven to desperation.

35. Refers to a terrible form of leprosy that attacked the joints. Compare Job 2:8. The verse is probably a repetition in a slightly different form taken from v. 27.

36. For the form of expression, see 17:15. Having rejected the divine king, they will be carried away, king and all, into a foreign land, where idolatry will be forced upon them.

37. Their sorrow will be aggravated by the fact that outsiders, startled by such an overthrow, will make them the object of sharp, cutting remarks, saying "Where is now your God?"

38–46. This section starts from a thought similar to that

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shalt gather little in; for the locust shall consume it.
39. Thou shalt plant vineyards and dress them, but thou
shalt neither drink of the wine, nor gather *the grapes;*
40. for the worm shall eat them. Thou shalt have olive
trees throughout all thy borders, but thou shalt not
anoint thyself with the oil; for thine olive shall cast *its*
41. *fruit.* Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but they
shall not be thine; for they shall go into captivity.
42. All thy trees and the fruit of thy ground shall the locust
43. possess. The stranger[1] that is in the midst of thee
shall mount up above thee higher and higher; and
44. thou shalt come down lower and lower. He shall lend
to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the
45. head, and thou shalt be the tail. And all these
curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee,
and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because
thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the LORD thy
God, to keep his commandments and his statutes

[1] SV *sojourner*, throughout the book, except 5 : 14.

expressed in v. 22 and covers about the same ground, with slight variations.

38. The failure of the crop, in spite of abundant sowing, Hag. 1 : 6; Mic. 6 : 15. For the plague of locusts, see Joel 2.

39. The vine, the olive, and the corn (wheat) were the important crops of Palestine upon which the people depended for sustenance and comfort; they shall all fail; the blight of barrenness is a sure sign of God's curse.

41. The same thought is expressed in even stronger form in v. 32.

43. Just the opposite of v. 13. **The stranger**, *i.e. the sojourner* (10 : 19), who is not dependent to the same extent on the soil, will become richer than the Israelites, to whom they were formally indebted. In Russia to-day the peasants or landed proprietors are often in debt to the Jews, who themselves are only *sojourners* in the land. The idea lying behind all this exhortation is that disobedience to the will of God causes a reversal of the laws which bring peace and prosperity and produces abnormal conditions.

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46. which he commanded thee: and they shall be upon
thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for
47. ever: because thou servedst not the LORD thy God DE
with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, by reason
48. of the abundance of all things: therefore shalt thou
serve thine enemies [1] which the LORD shall send against
thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in
want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron
49. upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee. The
LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from
the end of the earth, as the eagle flieth, a nation whose
50. tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce

[1] Vg. *enemy*.

46. Sets forth in striking form the absolute and permanent nature of the curse upon disobedience. It shall be a sign of God's justice and a wonder that arrests the attention of men, and the tragic consequences shall cling to the coming generations. For the possibility of restoration after repentance, see 4 : 29; 30 : 1–2.

47–68. The remainder of the chapter brings additional features to the description of the curse already given, dwelling specially upon the horrors which result from foreign conquest and oppression.

47. This is a characteristic thought of Deut., that the abundance of God's gifts may become a means of leading men to arrogant forgetfulness and wicked self-conceit, 6 : 10–12; 8 : 11–18.

48. These words may have been written at a time when the Israelites were actually groaning under the burden of foreign oppression. For the yoke of iron, see Jer. 28 : 14.

49. The conquering nation is to come from afar. The centre of the Babylonian empire was a great distance from Palestine, and by the Israelites, with their limited knowledge of geography, might well be called the end of the earth, Isa. 5 : 26. The language of the Assyrians and Babylonians, though belonging to the same family as that of the Hebrews, was yet sufficiently different to be foreign to them, Isa. 28 : 11; 33 : 19; Jer. 5 : 15. The swift and sudden movement of those great armies made a terrible impression on the smaller peoples, **as the eagle flieth**, lit., *as the vulture darteth*, Jer. 48 : 40; 49 : 22; Hab. 1 : 8.

50. This picture of the grim, ruthless Chaldeans is drawn from

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countenance, which shall not regard the person of the
51. old, nor shew favour to the young: and he shall eat
the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy ground,
[1]until thou be destroyed:[1] which also shall not leave
thee corn,[2] wine, or oil, the increase of thy kine, or the
young of thy flock, until he have caused thee to perish.
52. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy
high and fenced[3] walls come down, wherein thou
trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege
thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which
53. the LORD thy God hath given thee. And thou shalt
eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons
and of thy daughters which the LORD thy God hath
given thee; in the siege and [4]in the straitness, where-
with thine enemies shall straiten thee.[4]
54. The man that is tender among you, and very deli-
cate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and
toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the rem-
55. nant of his children which he hath remaining: so

[1] Gr. om. [2] Sam. Syr. add *or* (*and*). [3] SV *fortified*. [4] SV *in the distress wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee;* also in vs. 55 and 57.

real life and sharp experience. **Fierce countenance**, lit., m. *strong of face, i.e.* have a face that is firm, unmoved by any feeling of justice or pity.

52. There is to be a general siege of the strong places. In those days the strong walls even of a small city could offer considerable resistance to a mighty foe, and a stubborn people were in danger of trusting to this more than to the righteousness of their cause and the reasonableness of their temper. The laws of war were just the opposite of humane, and those who had been long held at bay rushed, at the moment of success, into unmentionable cruelties.

53. For such horrors, not at all imaginary, see 2 Kgs. 6 : 28; Jer. 19 : 9; Ezek. 5 : 10; Lam. 2 : 20; 4 : 10.

54. The sufferings and terrors are so great that all natural affections and bonds of kindness are destroyed.

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that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat, because he hath nothing left him; in the siege and in the straitness, wherewith
56. thine enemy shall straiten thee in all thy gates. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward
57. her son, and toward her daughter; and toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children[1] which she shall bear; for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly: in the siege and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemy
58. shall straiten thee in thy gates. If thou wilt not ob- D serve to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and
59. fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD; then the LORD will

[1] Gr. Syr. Tar. *child* or *son*.

57. The woman who has lived in luxury, only going forth into the street when carried in a magnificent litter and bravely attended, will now be driven into utter destitution and will be guilty of the most horrible coarseness and greed. It is a relief to think that there are many who would prefer death in any form rather than sink to this depth of degradation. The suggestive phrase **in the siege and in the straitness**, etc., which is so terribly illustrated, occurs three times here and also in Jer. 19:9.

58. This law is already regarded as written and presented in book form; see 31:9, where Moses is first said to have written the Deuteronomic Law. Compare 17:19. **Yahweh thy God.** In the thought of those days the name was not the mere sound or label, but the being and character. In later times the "name" stands for the whole sum and content of the religion, Isa. 59:19; Mal. 3:20; Ps. 61:6. Finally, reverence for the actual form, the very letter, was carried to such a superstitious extent that the Name was not pronounced, and in Greek and English "Lord" took its place.

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make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance,
60. and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance. And he will bring upon thee again all the diseases[1] of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto
61. thee. Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the
D[E] 62. LORD bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed. And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou didst not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.
63. And it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will rejoice over you to cause you to perish, and to destroy you; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest in to possess it.
64. And the LORD shall scatter thee among all peoples, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end

[1] So read Sam. Syr. Tar. Vg.; Heb. *every disease.*

59. The exceptional character and long duration of these strokes of God is again dwelt upon.

60. The promises given in times of faithfulness and hope are thus reversed, 7 : 15.

61. As if the terror of all these specific threats was not sufficient, all possible ills are included to insure complete destruction. The phrase usually runs, "this book of the law," 29 : 28; 39 : 10; 31 : 26.

63. This and the previous verse points to a reversal of all the great promises given to Israel and to the fathers, 26 : 5. It is a tremendously bold stroke to represent Yahweh as having the same joy in destruction as he once had in blessing. Compare the passionate struggle ascribed to Yahweh in Hos. 11 : 8. It shows what a high value is placed on conformity to the Law, and how far men have travelled from the tribal stage when the destruction of a nation meant the death of its god.

64. A widespread dispersion, which had already begun, is

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of the earth; and there thou shalt serve other gods,
which thou hast not known, thou nor thy fathers,
65. even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt
thou find no ease, and there shall be no rest for the
sole of thy foot: but the LORD shall give thee there
a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and pining of
66. soul: and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and
thou shalt fear night and day, and shalt have none[1]
67. assurance of thy life: in the morning thou shalt say,
Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say,
Would God[2] it were morning! for the fear of thine
heart which thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine
68. eyes which thou shalt see. And the LORD shall bring

[1] SV *no*. [2] SV om. *God*.

here predicted; this has been fulfilled in a larger sense than even this prophet dreamed of, but at the same time the wonderful strength and persistence of the religion has been shown. While under the first shock of exile, no doubt, many individuals lost their faith, yet as a race they learned to sing Yahweh's song in a foreign land (Ps. 137) and stood out before the world as the inflexible opponents of idolatry.

65. The chapter closes with a vivid description of the restless, troubled condition of the people in exile. The O. T. is rich in what may be called the poetry of sorrow; its phrases for the expression of disappointment, pain, and anxiety were not coined by mere students of literature. They reflect the tragic realities of the darkest experience. They tell of those bitter hours when men realize most keenly their need of God. Rest is regarded as the condition of prosperous life and regular worship, 12: 10. The heart is agitated; the eyes fail, looking in vain for the blessing; the soul languishes, consumed with fruitless anxiety.

66. **Thy life shall hang in doubt before thee**, lit., *thy life shall be hung up for thee in front*, as if suspended by a single thread that might break at any moment. Night and day are full of fears; there is no sense of security.

67. A vivid picture of one who is in agony of uncertainty; see Job. 7: 4. For the general spirit of the passage, compare Lev. 26: 36 f.

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thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I said unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall sell yourselves unto your[1] enemies for bondmen and for bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.

[1] So read Sam. Gr. Syr. Tar.; Heb. *thy*.

68. So complete will be the reversal of the redemption that they will go back to Egypt in Phœnician slave-galleys, and will be willing to purchase life by offering themselves as slaves, but even their enemies will be unwilling to purchase those upon whom there rests such a manifest curse of God.

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C. CLOSING SPEECHES AND NARRATIVES; CHAPS. 29–34

I. A SPEECH OF EXHORTATION AND CONSOLATION; CHAPS. 29, 30

29. These are the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb. D[s] 29:2

2. And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto

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29, 30. A speech of exhortation and consolation attributed to Moses.

Chapter 29 is an exhortation which seems in some parts at least to reflect the circumstances of the Exile. There is some uncertainty as to the relationship of v. 1, which in the Hebrew version is the last verse of the previous chapter; whether we should call it a subscription to 28 or a superscription to 29, it may be regarded as a link between the two, then **these are the words of the covenant** will refer to what has gone before, while **in the land of Moab** will define the situation in which the following speech is supposed to have been given; see v. 7.

1–5. A covenant was made at Horeb (Sinai) when the Israelites came out of Egypt, and then after the long wandering in the wilderness the covenant was renewed and enlarged in the land of Moab immediately before the death of Moses and the crossing of the Jordan, 4:13; 5:2.

2–9. A reminder of what Yahweh has done for them in the past. It is similar to the retrospects given in the earlier chapters. The two generations are drawn together, as in chaps. 1–3.

2. Moses calls all Israel together, as in 5:1, and calls to mind the wonders of the Exodus, as in 7:19.

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3. all his servants, and unto all his land; the great
temptations[1] which thine eyes saw, the signs, and those
4. great wonders: but the LORD hath not given you
an heart to know, and eyes to see, and ears to hear,
5. unto this day. And I have led you forty years in
the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon
you, [2]and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot:[2]
6. Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk
wine or strong drink: that ye might know that I am
7. the LORD your God. And when ye came unto this
place, Sihon the king of Heshbon, and Og the king
of Bashan, came out against us unto battle, and we
8. smote them: and we took their land, and gave it for
an inheritance unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites
9. and to the half tribe of the Manassites. Keep there-
fore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye
may prosper[3] in all that ye do.

DR 10. Ye stand this day all of you before the LORD your

[1] SV *trials.* [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. Tar. Vg. *your shoes are not waxen old upon your feet.*
[3] m. *deal wisely.*

4. It is possible for men to behold striking facts of history without perceiving their spiritual significance, their divine meaning. This is in all ages a part of the real tragedy of life, Isa. 6 : 10; Jer. 5 : 21.

5. See 2 : 7; 8 : 2; and Amos 2 : 10.

6. The emphasis, as in chap. 8, is on the miraculous provision made for Israel in the wilderness. God's power was shown most clearly when the ordinary means of sustenance were lacking. The change to the direct speech of Yahweh is peculiar, unless it is a quotation of a current formula; such change is very common in Ezekiel and the Priestly Code; see also Exod. 10 : 2 (JE) and 1 Kgs. 29 : 13.

7. For these events, see 2 : 32 f. and 3 : 1, 3, 8, 12 f.

9. **Prosper**; this word may be rendered, as in the m., *deal wisely;* it means that you may understand how to apply these principles to your present life so as to secure real success.

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God; [1] your heads, your tribes,[1] your elders,[2] and
11. your officers, even all the men of Israel, your little
ones,[3] your wives, and thy stranger that is in the
midst of thy camps,[4] from the hewer of thy wood[5]
12. unto the drawer of thy water: that thou shouldest
enter into the covenant of the LORD thy God, and into
his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee
13. this day: that he may establish thee this day unto D[8]
himself for a people, and that he may be unto thee
a God, as he spake unto thee, and as he sware unto
thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.
14. Neither with you only do I make this covenant and

[1] Gr. *the heads of your tribes.* [2] Gr. adds *your judges.* [3] Sam. Syr. Vg. add *and (your wives).* Gr. reads *your wives and your children,* [4] Sam. Gr. Syr. Tar. *camp.* [5] Sam. Gr. Syr. add *even.*

10–29. The covenant is for the present and coming generations; failure to keep it will lead to national disaster.

10. It is a general assembly of the people with its representatives, *stationed* before Yahweh for a solemn purpose. Probably it should be your heads (or chiefs), your judges, your elders, and your officers.

11. The covenant comprehends all classes, including the stranger (sojourner) resident within Israel's boundary. The stranger here seems to have a somewhat different position from that assigned to him in the other passages, 10:18; 14:21; he is regarded as fully incorporated into the social and religious life of the community. For the duties here assigned to him, see Josh. 9:21 ff. (P).

12. **Enter into**, lit., *pass over into*, may contain a reminiscence of the custom of passing between the parts of the sacrifice when the solemn covenant was made, Gen. 15:10; Jer. 34:18 f. **Oath**, lit., *imprecation*, the covenant is distinguished from a simple oath by having a ceremony with solemn sanctions consisting of mutual imprecations, Gen. 26:28; Neh. 10:29.

13. This verse states the meaning of this two-sided covenant; it establishes a living relation between Yahweh and Israel, but it is not an absolutely new thing, it is the recognition and expression of Yahweh's interest in Israel and kindness to the preceding generation, Gen. 17:7–8 P; Gen. 26:24. On the oath, see 1:8.

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15. this oath; but with him that standeth here with
us this day before the LORD our God, and also with
16. him that is not here with us this day: (for ye know
how we dwelt in the land of Egypt; and how we came
through the midst of the nations through which ye
17. passed; and ye have seen their abominations, and
their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which
Heb. 12:15 18. were among them:) lest there should be among you
man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart
turneth away [1] this day [1] from the LORD our God,
to go to serve the gods of those nations; lest there
should be among you a root that beareth gall [2] and

[1] Gr. om. [2] m. Heb. *rosh*, a poisonous herb.

15. With the present the future generations are included; all the generations of the chosen people are linked into one by the continuity of the divine mercy. Compare 5:3.

16. The great danger which may lead to the breaking of the covenant is the idolatry of those nations with whom they have come in contact, which, while it may be *detestable* to their teachers, has powerful attractions for the common people. We have here expressed in terms of past history the fierce struggle which endured for centuries.

17. **Their abominations, and their idols.** Here we have two very contemptuous terms applied to the idols of the heathen. The first is not the word usually translated by *abomination* in Deut., but a word which occurs only here in the Hex., but is common in the age of Jeremiah and Ezekiel when the battle against foreign religious practices was fierce, *e.g. detestable thing*, Jer. 16:18. The word rendered idols or *idol-blocks* (AV m. *dungy gods*) is of an uncertain meaning; it occurs only once more in the Hex., Lev. 26:30, several times in Kings, and 39 times in Ezek. One thing is certain, viz. that it embodies a bitter and contemptuous scorn of idolatry which is natural in the speech of men who are conscious that they are fighting for the highest truth in an hour of extreme peril.

18. Take heed therefore in the face of these sad examples, **lest there should be among you**, etc. It is well to omit "**this day**" with the Gr., as the warning is not confined to the present. The inclination to idolatry is described as a *root that brings forth as*

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19. wormwood; and it come to pass, when he heareth
the words of this curse,[1] that he bless himself in his
heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in
the stubbornness of mine heart, [2] to destroy the moist
20. with the dry: [2] the LORD will not pardon him, but
then the anger of the LORD and his jealousy shall
smoke against that man, and all the curse that is
written in this book shall lie [3] upon him, and the LORD
21. shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the
LORD shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes
of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant
22. that is [4] written in this book of the law. And the gener-
ation to come, your children that shall rise up after
you, and the foreigner that shall come from a far land,
shall say, when they see the plagues of that land,
and the sicknesses wherewith the LORD hath made it

[1] m. *oath* (and so vs. 20, 21). [2] m. *to add drunkenness to thirst.* [3] Gr. Tar. *cleave*, or *adhere*. [4] Gr. Syr. Tar. Vg. read *are*, (*i.e.* with *curses*).

its fruit poison and wormwood. The effects are deadly as well as bitter.

19. **To destroy the moist with the dry**, lit., *to sweep away the watered and the dry, i.e.* to destroy the whole land; that which is the result of the idolater's action is here put as if it were his deliberate purpose.

20. **Will not pardon**; the original is stronger, lit., *will not be willing to pardon him*, because he has sinned wilfully against the light. His jealousy, 4 : 24. The smoke of the divine anger, Ps. 74 : 31. **Shall lie upon him.** The word lie is used of animals, Gen. 4 : 7; 49 : 9, and represents the curse as an animal or demon settling down upon the man. The Greek and the Targum have the feebler word *cleave unto him.*

22. The declaration of judgment passes now from the individual idolator to the nation as a whole. **The generation to come**; here the writer addresses the people of a time later than Moses, and seeks to impress upon them his great thought that their national misfortunes are the result of disobeying the Law. The inquiry concerning the significance of these calamities is put dramatically into the mouth of future generations and of foreigners.

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23. sick; *and that* the whole land thereof is brimstone,
and salt, *and* a burning, *that* it is not sown, nôr bear-
eth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the over-
throw of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim,
which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his
24. wrath: even all the nations shall say, Wherefore[1]
hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what meaneth
25. the heat of this great anger? Then men shall say,
Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD, the
God of their fathers, which he made with them when
26. he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt; and
went and served other gods, and worshipped them,
gods whom[2] they knew not, and whom he had not
27. given[3] unto them: therefore the anger of the LORD
was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the
28. curse that is written in this book: and the Lord
rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath,
and in great indignation, and cast them into another
29. land, as at this day. The secret things belong unto

[1] Sam. Tar. Syr. read *and why*. [2] SV *that* for whom. [3] m. Heb. *divided*.

23. The whole land has become like certain barren tracts in the region of the Dead Sea covered with saline and bituminous matter which hinders all vegetation, Gen. 19:24; Job 18:15. "God's overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah" is evidently an ancient phrase, and standing illustration of an extreme penalty, Amos. 4:11; Isa. 1:9, etc. For **Admah and Zeboiim**, see Hos. 11:8; Gen. 14:2.

25. For the same words, see 1 Kgs. 9:8; Jer. 22:9.

26. Whom he had not apportioned unto them. For the idea, see 4:19.

27. This verse and 21 show that the preacher has before him the written book with its laws and curses.

28. The phraseology of this verse is closely related to Jer.; see 21:5; 22:26; 32:27 of that book.

29. The author sets the past and future in contrast. The future is in the hand of Yahweh. He will guide it according to his

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the LORD our God: but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

30. And it shall come to pass, when all these things are D[E]
come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which
I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to
mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy
2. God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the LORD
thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all
that I command thee this day, thou and thy children,
3. with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; that then

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good pleasure, and reveal it in due time; that which is already revealed belongs to us and in the form of history shows us the importance of keeping the divine laws. Such a statement belongs to a time when men were looking back sorrowfully upon the solemn lessons of their own national life. It does not contradict the teaching of the chapter, which does not give absolute predictions of particular events, but sets forth in a pictorial fashion the principle that the people of Israel will sow that which they reap.

Chap. 30. This chapter contains a consolatory discourse on the efficacy of repentance (1–14) and a final exhortation that is related to Chap. 28 (15–20). The first section reflects the circumstances and feelings of the Exilic period, and may be intended to give a more helpful view after the dark threatening of 29; it is a sign of living faith that many of these teachers were convinced that those words of dreadful doom could not be the last utterance from a merciful God. The second section agrees so well in spirit and style with the earlier exhortations that it may well be a part of the original book. The striking passage 4:29–31 presents in brief form the principle that is more fully illustrated in the first paragraph of this chapter.

1. Turns back to 28:2–15. **Call them to mind**, lit., *bring back to thy heart*, the heart being in O. T. psychology the seat of reflection, Prov. 23:7. **Hath driven thee**: the phrase is common in this connection in Jer. (8:3; 16:15).

2. The repentance to be effective must be deep and sincere, as we would say, whole-hearted, **with all thine heart, and with all thy soul**, 4:29; 6:5.

3. It is possible that there is a play on words or sounds such

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the LORD thy God will turn[1] thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither the LORD thy God
4. hath scattered thee. If *any of* thine outcasts be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch
5. thee: and the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply
6. thee above thy fathers. And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with
7. all thy soul, that thou mayest live. And the LORD

[1] m. *return to.*

as the Hebrews loved; if thou wilt turn to Yahweh then he will given a decisive turn to thy fortune. The phrase here rendered **turn thy captivity** has a more general meaning, viz. to change one's fortunes. See such passages as Jer. 29:14; Ezek. 29:14; where, as here, the specific blessing of the return from captivity is mentioned separately. See a strikingly similar collocation of phrases, Jer. 12:15; I will return and have compassion upon them, 33:26; I will change their destiny and have compassion upon them.

4. At one time the Hebrews had a more limited view of Yahweh's dominion; they thought that to be driven beyond their own special territory was to be surrendered to the power of other gods (1 Sam. 26:19), but now they have learned "to sing Yahweh's song in a foreign land" and know that no place is so distant as to be beyond the range of his power, 28:64; Neh. 1:9. **The uttermost parts of heaven**, the remote regions where the solid vault of heaven rests upon the earth.

6. A great promise. There is to be such a wonderful thing as spiritual regeneration, so that the people will have a mind quick to perceive the truth and a heart to obey it. It is probable that the idea of "circumcision of the heart" originates with the great prophet Jeremiah. This is one of the places where the O. T. approaches the spirituality of the Christian religion. See on 10:6, and compare Jer. 31:33; 32:39; Ezek. 11:19; 36:26.

7. The curses are not withdrawn, but are turned over on to

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thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies,
and on them that hate thee, which [1] persecuted thee.
8. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the
LORD,[2] and do all his commandments which I com-
9. mand thee this day. And the LORD thy God will
make thee plenteous in all the work of thine hand,[3]
in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle,
and in the fruit of thy ground, for good: for the LORD
will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced
over thy fathers: if thou shalt obey the voice of the
10. LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his
statutes which are written in this book of the law;
if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine
heart, and with all thy soul.
11. For this commandment which I command thee this
day, it is not too hard [4] for thee, neither is it far off.
12. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who Rom. 10: 6-9

[1] SV *that* for *which*. [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. add *thy God*. [3] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. read *hands*. [4] m. *wonderful*.

Israel's enemies; for the thought, see 7 : 15. The statement here disturbs the connection and may be an adaptation from the former place.

8. The result of this "circumcision of the heart" will be a return to God in the spirit of loyal obedience, with consequent prosperity, 28 : 1; 11 : 15.

11–14. A clear announcement of the fact that these requirements of religion are reasonable and attainable.

11. A twofold statement that the commandment is not a mystery (Ps. 139 : 6) beyond human comprehension, it has a clearness, definiteness, and simplicity of its own; and it is not remote from man's life, it is not hidden in some far-off, inaccessible place. We may regard this as an early form of "apologetic." Deuteronomy destroyed many of the religious customs which were near to the life of common men, and bound up with old associations, but it brings in its place a definite comprehensive law.

12. In this and the next verse the two most distant places are

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shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it?

13. Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto
14. us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

D 15. See, I have set before thee this day life and good,

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cited **heaven** above and **beyond the sea**, and we are told that there is no need of a messenger to bring the law from those distant regions. Some of the ancient Rabbis used this to prove that the law is the sum of all wisdom, saying that another Moses is not needed to bring the Law from heaven as there is no law left behind in heaven. That view of the finality of the Law would tend to arrest all further progress and it is not to be supposed that the writer of this passage would go so far. That view led to the rejection of the Great Teacher.

14. The revelation is near and in such a form that it can be made a matter of reflection (Ps. 1) and conversation (6 : 7), but the end of all this is the practical use of it as a guide to right conduct. Compare St. Paul's application of this to the living faith that apprehends the immediate presence and power of the Christ, Rom. 10 : 8. There is a great truth in assertions concerning the "simplicity" of the gospel; but if we take them in a shallow conventional fashion, we may lose the thought of the mystic beauty and infinite mystery of our faith. A hard and fast law or dogma may finally destroy the spirit of which it was once a noble embodiment.

15–20. The closing paragraph of this chapter is also the closing section of the great exhortation which begins in 6, is taken up at the end of 26, and runs through 28. It presents once more the clear alternatives which are the objects of deliberate choice, life and good, and death and evil.

15. **Life.** This does not mean, as it might do in the N. T., deeper personal experience or individual immortality, but the present and future blessedness of the nation, in secure possession of the Promised Land. Those who are meek, pious, obedient to the law, will inherit the earth, Ps. 37 : 11. In the same atmosphere **evil** and **good** mean misfortune and prosperity. The teaching of Deuteronomy has its spiritual side (6 : 4) but a distinct doctrine of material rewards and punishments holds a prominent place in it.

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16. and death and evil; [1] in that I command thee this
day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways,
and to keep his commandments and [2] his statutes and
his judgements,[3] that thou mayest live and multiply,
and that the LORD thy God may bless thee in the land
whither thou goest in to possess it.
17. But if thine heart turn away, and thou wilt not
hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other
18. gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day,
that ye shall surely perish; ye shall not prolong your
days upon the land, whither thou [4] passest over Jor-
19. dan to go in to possess it. I call heaven and earth
to witness against you this day, that I have set before
thee life and death, the blessing and the curse:
therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and
20. thy seed: to love the LORD thy God, to obey his
voice, and to cleave unto him: for he [5] is thy life,

[1] Gr. inserts *if thou wilt hearken unto the commandments of Yahweh, thy God (which I command*, etc.). [2] Gr. om. *and*. [3] SV ordinances. [4] Sam. Gr. Syr. *ye*. [5] m. *that*.

16. In the original the sentence is broken at the beginning so that we must add a clause from the Greek version thus: "*If thou wilt pay attention to the commandments of Yahweh thy God* **which I command**," etc. Compare 11 : 22; 19 : 9.

Here we have clearly recognized the two elements in religious apostasy, there is the inward turning, the inclination towards the sensuous and sensual, then there is the strong outward attraction, people are drawn away by some popular movement. See 4 : 19, where the same word, *let one's self be driven*, is used of the allurements of star-worship.

18. **I denounce**, *i.e. I declare;* the same word is rendered **profess** in 26 : 3. For the sentiment and phrases of these verses, see 4 : 26; 8 : 19.

20. **He is thy life.** Loyalty to him is the condition of averting the threatened destruction and the pledge of continued national prosperity. While beginnings of individualism may be traced in Deuteronomy, its outlook as a whole is national; **thou** means

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and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

II. The Narrative of the Last Words and Deeds of Moses; Chaps. 31–34

D[2] **31.** 1 And Moses went and spake[1] these words unto
2. all Israel. And he said unto them, I am an hundred

[1] Gr. reads *And Moses finished speaking all (these words, etc.).*

the nation as a political and religious community. Yahweh is the life of the nation; its charter of material prosperity, and religious purity is found in the great declaration of 6:4–5. One of the greatest sermons ever preached closes with this splendid note; the hope of the preacher was disappointed as to its material form, the catastrophe came and the nation was shattered, but his inspired and inspiring words have had a greater influence than he dreamed of, they helped to create a new Church that has played its part in the world, they have gained new significance as centuries have passed away, and even the careless world would not willingly let them die.

Chaps. 31–34. The last days of Moses. This final section of the book consists of (1) statements concerning the appointment of Joshua as the successor to Moses and (2) ordinances for the regular reading of the Deuteronomic Law, 31; (3) introduction to the Song, (4) the Song of Moses, and (5) Yahweh's decree concerning his death, 32; (6) the Blessing of Moses, 33, and (7) the account of his death, 34.

31. This chapter is composite; it contains parallel accounts of the appointment of Joshua, vs. 1–8, and 14, 15, 23, while the remainder contains varied elements.

1. *Appointment of Joshua as successor to Moses;* 31:1–8, 14, 15, 23

1–8. Moses speaks words of encouragement to the people and to Joshua.

1. This paragraph should be compared with 3:27, 28, where Moses is commanded to take the view of the Promised Land from Pisgah and then give the charge to Joshua. The opening words, **And Moses went and spake these words**, are difficult to explain,

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and twenty years old this day; I can no more go
out and come in: and the LORD hath said unto me,
3. Thou shalt not go over this Jordan. The LORD thy
God [1] he will go over [1] before thee; he will destroy
these nations from before thee, and thou shalt possess [2]
them: *and* [3] Joshua, [1] he shall go over [1] before thee,
4. as the LORD hath spoken. And the LORD shall do
unto them as he did to Sihon and to Og, the kings
of the Amorites, and unto their land; whom he de-
5. stroyed. And the LORD shall deliver them up before
you, and ye shall do unto them according unto all
the commandment which I have commanded you.
6. Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be
affrighted at them: for the LORD thy God, he it is
that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor Heb. 13:5
7. forsake thee. And Moses called unto Joshua, and
said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and

[1] Sam. Gr. *he that goeth over.* [2] SV dispossess. [3] So Sam. Gr., Heb. om. *and.*

and it is most natural to refer them to something that has gone before; so after 29:1–2, the easiest way out of the difficulty is to adopt the reading of the Greek version, *When Moses had completed these words to all Israel*, etc.

2. P gives the same age, 34:7; Exod. 7:7; but in the first passage adds "his eye was not yet dim nor his natural force abated." Here we are told that Moses is no longer able to undertake the duties of public life. See on 28:6, for the clause **go out and come in.** Compare 3:27, thou shalt not go over this Jordan.

3. Though the great messenger and mediator, Moses, is to be removed, yet their God will still go before them as a conquering power, and another leader shall be appointed according to the promise in 3:28, from which place the last clause of this verse is repeated. The intention here is to give prominence to the thought that Yahweh is the real permanent leader of Israel's hosts.

5. **According unto all the commandment:** this is to be explained by reference to Chap. 7, where the relation of the Israelites to alien and conquered peoples is fully defined.

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of a good courage: for thou shalt [1] go with [1] this people into the land which the LORD hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause
8. them to inherit it. And the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.
9. And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of
10. Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of *every* seven years, in the set time of the

[1] Sam. Vg. *bring*.

7. **Go with**: it is better to read with several versions "*bring*" this people; he is not merely to accompany them, but is to be a real leader in a situation where persistent courage and living energy will be a constant need.

8. But the great leader, the successor of Moses, can only rise to these heroic heights of duty and service by seeing him who is invisible and recognizing the constant presence of the Divine Guide. **He will not fail**, lit., *drop*, the man to whom he has given this call.

2. *Regulation for the Public Reading of the Law;* 31:9–13

9–13. Moses ordains that the Deuteronomic Law shall be read publicly every seven years, at the Feast of Booths, in the Year of Release. The paragraph is not closely connected with the one immediately preceding, but refers to the legislation in the earlier chapters; the emphasis here is not on the writing of the Law, but on the fact that it was delivered to the priests the sons of Levi for a special purpose hereafter defined, 10:8; 19:1, 12.

10. For the Year of Release, and the Feast of Tabernacles, see 15:1–9; 16:13–15. **Set time**, from a verb that means *to fix* or *appoint a time*, is a more general term than that used for pilgrimage or festival and may include any regular appointed day such as sabbath or New Year. The rendering *solemn* feasts in AV is accounted for etymologically, where *solemn* has the sense of Lat. *solemnis*, *i.e.* stated.

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11. year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all
Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in
the place which he shall choose, thou[1] shalt read this
law before all Israel in their hearing.
12. Assemble the people, the men and the women and
the little ones, and thy stranger that is within thy
gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn,
and fear the LORD your[2] God, and observe to do all
13. the words of this law; and that their children, which
have not known, may hear, and learn to fear the
LORD your[2] God, as long as ye live in the land whither
ye[3] go over Jordan to possess it.
14. And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thy days JE
approach that thou must die: call Joshua, and

[1] Gr. *ye*. [2] Tar. Syr. *their*. [3] Sam. Gr. Vg. *they*.

11. **To appear before Yahweh**: the original form was no doubt to see the face of; consult the note on 16:16. Unless this charge was originally addressed to Joshua and has been modified in favor of the priest and elders, we should read the plural with the Greek, *Ye shall* **read**.

12. Every class in the community is to be represented at the reading of the Deuteronomic Law, as it deals with the rights and duties of all classes; and such a public function reminds them that they are bound together by ties stronger than those of blood and material interest, viz. obedience to One Supreme Lord.

13. The insistence on the fact that religion is a subject that can be taught to the children and thus handed down to coming generations is a marked feature of Deut. (compare 4:9; 6:7), and the wonderful tenacity of Judaism is largely due to the thoroughness with which this truth has been appreciated and absorbed.

14–23. In this paragraph vs. 14, 15, and 23 require separate attention, as they contain a parallel statement from another document concerning the appointment of Joshua. Compare Exod. 33:7–11 (E).

14. **Thy days approach for dying,** as in Gen. 47:29 (J). **Tent of meeting** only here and the next verse in Deut.; it occurs in JE, but is especially frequent in P, about 132 times. The word **went**

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present yourselves in the tent of meeting, that I may give him a charge. And Moses and Joshua went, and presented themselves in the tent of meeting.

15. And the LORD appeared in the Tent in a pillar of cloud: and the pillar of cloud stood over[1] the door of the Tent.

D[E] 16. And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the strange gods of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with

[1] m. *by*.

finds its explanation in Exod. 33 : 7, where it is said that Moses used to take the tent and pitch it without the camp, afar off from the camp, etc. **Present yourselves**: in the passages belonging to Deut. this word has a different shade of meaning; it is rendered *stand before* in 7 : 24; 9 : 2; and 11 : 25.

15. For **the pillar of cloud**, the visible accompaniment of the divine presence, see Num. 12 : 5; Exod. 33 : 9.

3. *Introduction to the Song;* 31 : 16–20

16. With this verse begins the introduction to the Song contained in the next chapter, in the form of a statement that after the death of Moses the people will forsake their God and thus bring upon themselves many evils and troubles, and then the Song will witness against them for Yahweh. **Sleep** (*lie down*) **with thy fathers**, Gen. 47 : 30 (J). **This people**: these words are given in a contemptuous tone, Exod. 32 : 9; Isa. 6 : 9. This figure, used only here in Deut. for religious apostasy, is found elsewhere, but especially in Hos. and Ezek. it is based upon the comparison of the union of Yahweh and the nation to the marriage bond; it has, however, a certain literalness when we remember the impure practices that were common at the heathen shrines. Compare 23 : 17, and see Lev. 17 : 7; Num. 15 : 9; Ps. 73 : 27. **The strange gods of the land, whither they go to be among them**, lit., *the foreign gods of the land whither it goeth in, in its midst.* The sentence is awkward in the original; it is possible that the clause "of the land whither it goeth in" was inserted later to keep the Mosaic age free from the suspicion of idolatry. When the fully developed

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17. them. Then my anger shall be kindled against them
in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide
my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and
many evils and troubles shall come upon them; so
that they will say in that day, Are not these evils
come upon us because our God is not among us?
18. And I will surely hide my face[1] in that day for all
the evil which they[2] shall have wrought, in that they[2]
19. are turned unto other gods. Now therefore write ye[3]
this song for you, and teach thou[4] it the children of
Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. Tar. add *from them.* [2] So read Sam. Gr. Syr., Heb. *he* (sing.).
[3] Gr. adds *the words of.* [4] Gr. Vg. *ye.*

law is carried back to the time of Moses, the later ages are regarded as filled almost altogether with acts of rebellion against Yahweh's pure commands. This view is expressed very strongly in the prophecies of Ezekiel; compare with this the statement of Joshua 24 (E) concerning the idolatry of "your fathers."

17. Instead of devouring the nations (7 : 16), those nations, as the instruments of Yahweh's justice, will devour them. **Hide my face**; compare, 32 : 20; Isa. 8 : 17; Mic. 3 : 4, and note that the phrase is frequent in later writers. **Are not these evils**, etc.? This question was on the lips of many as a consequence of the great sufferings that came upon the nation when it was crushed by the cruel power of Babylon. "But my words and my statutes which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not overtake your fathers? and they turned and said, Like as the Lord of Hosts thought to do unto us, according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us," Zech. 1 : 6. Misfortunes are accepted as a sure sign of God's anger and withdrawal; then this doctrine had to be made the subject of careful consideration, Isa. 53 : 4; Ps. 73.

18. If the people persist in their infidelity, as they are here supposed to do, their God will surely hide from them the light and blessing of his presence.

19. **Write ye . . . teach thou.** If this is taken as it stands, Moses and Joshua are first addressed, then Moses alone. On this point the versions are at variance, but vs. 16 and 22 make it probable that we should have the singular throughout. The idea is that Moses, having left behind such a clear warning as the Song

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20. a witness for me against the children of Israel. For
when I shall have brought them into the land which
I sware unto their fathers,[1] flowing with milk and
honey; and they shall have eaten and filled them-
selves, and waxen[2] fat; then will they turn unto
other gods, and serve them, and despise me, and
21. break my covenant. And it shall come to pass,
when many evils and troubles are come upon them,
that this song shall testify before them as a witness;
for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of
their seed: for I know their imagination which they
[3] go about,[3] even now, before I have brought them into
the land which I sware.[4]

JE 22. So Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught
23. it the children of Israel. And he gave Joshua the
son of Nun a charge, and said, Be strong and of a

[1] Gr. adds *to give to them a land.* [2] SV here and elsewhere, *waxed.* [3] SV which they *frame.* [4] Sam, Gr. Syr. add *to their fathers.*

contains, if sorrows come upon the people as a result of apostasy, the responsibility and blame rests altogether upon themselves.

20. That which is set forth as a warning in 8 : 19 here appears as a definite prediction.

21. **This song shall testify before them,** lit. *shall answer before it, i.e.* before the nation. The Song now written will in the future *respond* to the needs of national and individual life. Rightly understood and intelligently applied, this principle is the one that gives vitality and meaning to the exposition of scripture. At the end of the verse add, for completeness, *to their fathers,* as given in the versions. Here is the same strong faith in the written book and the power of teaching to mould the minds of coming generations, though here it is set in a more pessimistic context. The prediction is placed in relation to life by the declaration that Moses can already in the present see the seeds of future degeneration actually at work, and although he does not hope to destroy them completely, he will leave behind a testimony that may exert a wholesome effect, Gen. 6 : 5; 8 : 21 (J).

23. **And he gave,** that is, Yahweh gave the charge to Joshua, as is clear from the two preceding verses; if this is read after vs.

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good courage: for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I sware unto them: and I will be with thee.

24. And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end D^R
of writing the words of this law in a book, until they
25. were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites,
which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, say-
26. ing, Take this book of the law, and put it by the
side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God,
27. that it may be there for a witness against thee. For
I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold,
while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been
rebellious against the LORD; and how much more
28. after my death? Assemble unto me all the elders of D^E

22, Moses becomes the subject of the verb. Note then the three accounts of the appointment of Joshua, that of Deut. 1 : 37; 3 : 21–28; 31 : 7–8, that of E given here, and P's account in Num. 27 : 22–23, where Joshua is publicly appointed before Eleazer the priest and all the congregation.

24 ff. in their present form tell how Moses gave instructions for the Deuteronomic Code to be deposited beside the ark. If the suggestion that "law" in 24 and 26 was originally "song" is accepted, then the paragraph would be the continuation of the introduction to the Song; as it is, we must treat it as a statement parallel to 9 ff., which passes somewhat abruptly into this introduction to the Song. See **these words** in v. 28. **Book** may refer to a roll small enough for this poem or large enough for the legal code, Exod. 17 : 14; Isa. 30 : 8.

26. Those who are to have charge of the ark are not the subordinate clergy of the later Priestly Code, but the Levitical priests referred to in 17 : 18. **A witness against**, this expression is used of the Song in 21; the law may of course be a witness against those who disobey it, but the most natural way to regard it is as a standard and guide for the regulation of conduct.

27. Compare the same sentiment ascribed to Yahweh in v. 21, and see the following passages: 9 : 7; 24; 10 : 16.

28. Should probably read *your elders, your judges, and your officers;* see on 29 : 10; the phrase **elders of your tribes** is peculiar, and the words for judges and tribes are similar in the original.

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your tribes, and your officers,[1] that I may speak these words in their ears, and call heaven and earth
29. to witness against them. For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands.
30. And Moses spake in the ears of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song, until they were finished.

D[S] 32. Give ear, ye heavens, and I will speak;
And let the earth hear the words of my mouth:

[1] Gr. adds *and your judges.*

As the paragraph now stands, Moses is speaking to the Levites; the usual procedure would be for the elders and officers to summon the people, v. 30. **These words**, referring, of course, to the poem which is about to be delivered and which begins with an appeal to the heavens and the earth.

29. **The latter days.** This phrase is placed in a different atmosphere from that in 4 : 31; there the time of blessing comes after judgment and repentance, and that is the more usual shade of meaning; here the outlook does not go beyond the apostasy and punishment in the future period of their history. In later times it became a technical term of Jewish eschatology, and the most common view was that after the destruction of Israel's enemies there would come a time of permanent peace and prosperity, Joel 3 : 18.

4. *The Song of Moses;* 32 : 1–47

The song which bears this title is a didactic poem in which the poet seeks to justify the ways of Israel's God, setting forth the righteous dealing of Yahweh in contrast with the folly and ingratitude of his people, and giving the reason why this nation that has so deeply offended him may yet hope in his mercy, a mercy that will be manifested in taking vengeance on their enemies and bringing redemption to the people of his choice. While,

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2. My doctrine shall drop as the rain,[1]
My speech shall distil as the dew;
As the small rain upon the tender grass,
And as the showers upon the herb:
3. For I will proclaim the name of the LORD:
Ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

[1] Sam. Gr. Syr. add *and*.

in this poem, the people are accused of ingratitude and their unfaithfulness condemned, yet, on the whole, the tone of it is more kindly and tender than we would have expected from the reference in 31:39; the final outcome is to give consolation to and beget hopefulness in the minds of a people that have suffered the severe strain of heavy judgments. It has been called "a compendium of prophetic theology"; the author, a true poet, though not possessing the fiery passion or brilliant originality of an Isaiah, has been a devout student in the school of the prophets. The poem is carefully written, the verse runs smoothly; it cannot be divided into regular strophes, but has well-marked divisions of subject, and the various parts of the theme are developed with logical skill and persuasive impressiveness. Its affinities of language and style are with the prophets and writers of the Exilic period. Like the great prophet of the Captivity, the author of Isaiah 40–55, the poet looks forward to an early deliverance. It may have circulated as a separate poem, attributed to Moses, before it was worked into the framework of the present book.

1. The introduction, 1–3. The subject of the poem being so sublime, the poet feels justified in calling upon the **heavens** and **the earth**, *i.e.* the whole visible world, to pay attention to his declaration; compare Isa. 1:2; Ps. 50:4; in the other passages in Deut. 4:26; 30:19; 31:28, heaven and earth are called *as witnesses*.

2. **My doctrine shall drop** or let my *teaching* drop as the rain. The prophet expresses the hope that his words may act upon the life of the afflicted nation as the gentle, fructifying rain upon the dry, barren earth. The word translated doctrine means literally *something received*, it belongs to the wisdom literature, Isa. 29:14; Job 11:4; Prov. 1:5; 4:2, etc.

3. *For Yahweh's name I will call out*, as some thing in which men ought to boast who know his wonderful dealings with his people. Let all who hear meditate upon this theme and render to the God of Israel the honor that is due to his name.

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Rev. 15 : 3

4. The Rock,[1] his work is perfect;
For all his ways are judgement:[2]
A God of faithfulness and without iniquity,
Just and right is he.[3]

Phil. 2 : 15

5. They have dealt corruptly[4] with him, *they are* not his children, *it is* their blemish;[5]
They are a perverse and crooked generation.

6. Do ye thus requite the LORD,
O foolish people and unwise?
Is not he thy father that hath bought[6] thee?
He hath made thee, and established thee.

[1] Gr. *God.* [2] SV *justice.* [3] Gr. *Yahweh.* [4] m. *corrupted themselves, they,* etc. (so Sam. Gr.). [5] m. *but a blot upon them.* [6] m. *possessed* or *gotten.*

4–6. Statement of the theme. Yahweh's righteousness and faithfulness in striking contrast to the disloyal conduct of his people.

The Rock. He is the true Rock; *rock* is a favorite expression in this poem, used also of heathen gods, vs. 31; it expresses the firmness, unchangeableness, and reliability of Yahweh, as shown in past history, 1 Sam. 2 : 2; Isa. 44 : 8; Ps. 18 : 2. **Judgement,** *right* in the legal sense. He has governed the world and guided his people according to perfectly just laws.

5. It is impossible to give a satisfactory translation of the first clause; the sense seems to be:

His sons have dealt corruptly towards him,
A twisted and crooked generation.

6. Then follows a question of astonishment and reproach:

Would ye pay back Yahweh in this fashion,
O foolish and unwise people?

The word **foolish** here means stupid as to spiritual things, dull, obtuse in regard to moral conduct, 22 : 21; Gen. 33 : 7; 2 Sam. 13 : 12. **Unwise** is the same thing differently expressed, lacking in the practical good sense and wisdom which comes from the fear of God. The continuation of the question goes deeper into the relationship between Yahweh and his people, thus casting a powerful light upon their ingratitude that shows it in all its meanness.

Is he not thy Father who created thee,
Did he not make thee and establish thee?

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7. Remember the days of old,
Consider the years of many generations:
Ask thy father, and he will shew thee;
Thine elders, and they will tell thee.
8. When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance,
When he separated the children of men,

The word rendered **buy** or *create* means to acquire, often by buying but also in other ways; Yahweh acquired this nation by creating it, forming it for himself. The reference is *not* to the creation of man, as in the Genesis narratives, but to the choice of Israel in the wilderness period; see v. 10. At that time the nation was created, there was preparation for the great event, but the Exodus was in a real sense a creative epoch for the nation.

7–14. The wonderful blessings which Yahweh has showered on Israel.

7. **The days of old**, as the following verses show, refer not to the patriarchal age but to the time when the nation was brought into existence under Moses. **Many generations**, lit., *generation and generation, i.e.* successive generations. The writer evidently looks back upon the long stretch of time from his own day to that of Moses. In those days history was not written in full, gathered together, and arranged in the shelves of great libraries. If men would know the story of the past they must ask their fathers and the elders of the community, who had received the tradition from those who had gone before; some writings there were, but very largely by word of mouth the story of God's dealings with the nation had travelled down from father to son. This great thought that history is a revelation of the wisdom and goodness of God is prominent in other parts of Deuteronomy. **They will tell thee**, or will *say* to thee; then we must treat a number of the following verses as a direct quotation of their statements.

8. For the general idea compare Paul's declaration, Acts 17:26. When Yahweh marked out the boundaries of the nations, he reserved a home among them for his people. **Most High**, a poetical title of God, Num. 24:16; Isa. 14:14; and several psalms, used appropriately here to suggest the absolute supremacy of Israel's God. *Sons of Adam* in AV is here rightly rendered **children of men**. The text as it stands simply claims that when Yahweh caused the various nations to settle in different localities he reserved a place for Israel suited to its needs. Later Jews interpreted the passage literally and found a correspondence between

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He set the bounds of the peoples
According to the number [1]of the children of Israel.[1]
9. [2]For the LORD'S portion is his people;
Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.[2]
10. He found him in a desert land,
And in the waste howling wilderness;
He compassed him about, he cared for him,
He kept him as the apple of his eye:
11. As an eagle that stirreth up her nest,
That fluttereth over her young,
[3]He spread abroad his wings, he took them,
He bare them on his pinions:[3]

[1] Gr. *of the angels of God.* [2] Gr. reads *And the Lord's portion is his people Jacob; Israel is the lot,* etc. [3] m. *Spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her pinions.*

the seventy nations of Gen. 10 and the seventy souls of Gen. 46:27. The reading of the Greek should be noted in this case, it has "*according to the number of angels* (i.e. *sons*) *of God.*" This would contain an anticipation of the later doctrine of guardian angels, Dan. 10:13–20; 12:1. On this view, while the nations were divided according to the number of the patron angels, Israel had the preference of being under the immediate care of the Supreme God, as is clearly expressed in the next verse; compare 7:6; 10:15.

10. Israel was found in a land that was a wilderness region, in a district that was barren and solitary, where the loneliness was made more impressive and oppressive by the howling of wild beasts, Hos. 9:10; Ezek. 16:5. Then in its hour of weakness and danger the nation became the object of Yahweh's most careful attention and watchful consideration. **The apple of his eye,** the pupil of the eye, the most delicate and precious part; Ps. 17:8; Prov. 7:2.

11. By the use of a beautiful figure from the life of birds illustrates the care Yahweh has shown in the manner in which he has disciplined his people, endeavoring to train them in the way of independent action. The vulture stirs up the young ones, stimulates them to action, at the same time hovers over them, slowly training them to exercise their powers of flight. The same figure is suggested in Exod. 19:4; compare Deut. 1:31. In the account

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12. The LORD alone did lead him,
And there was no strange [1] god with him.
13. He made him ride on the high places [2] of the earth,
And he did eat [3] the increase of the field;
And [4] he made him to suck honey out of the rock,
And oil out of the flinty rock;
14. Butter of kine, and milk of sheep,
With fat of lambs,
And rams [5] of the breed of Bashan, and goats,
With the fat of kidneys of wheat;
And of the blood of the grape thou drankest wine.

[1] SV foreign. [2] Gr. reads *strength*. [3] Sam. Gr. Syr. *And he fed him*. [4] Sam. Gr. Syr. om. *and*; Gr. reads *they sucked*. [5] Gr. reads at end of preceding line; *of calves* (sons of bulls) *and goats*.

of the Exodus we are told that they were not led by the way of the Philistines, although that was near, lest they should see war and repent, etc., Exod. 13:17.

12. This verse condemns not only the forsaking of Yahweh, but also what is known as *syncretism*, *i.e.*, the mixing of religions or the joining of other gods to his worship. He did this great thing, and he did it *alone;* there was no foreign god with him as a helper, Hos. 13:4; Isa. 43:12; compare 2 Kgs. 11:2.

13. As Yahweh himself moves in majesty over the earth (Amos 4:13; Mic. 1:3) or sea (Job 9:8), so he makes his people to advance in victorious march, in spite of all hindrances, over the high places of the earth, and causes them to eat (Gr. Sam. Isa. 58:14) the increase of the fields. Note the enthusiasm for Palestine, here evidently the praise of one who knew and loved the land. Its rocks and sandy places that would here be regarded as naturally barren yielded rich products for the sustenance and enjoyment of the Israelites. Bees found shelter in the crags and olives flourished in the sandy soil, 8:15; Ps. 81:17; Job 29:6.

14. **Butter**, *i.e.*, curd, thick sour milk, a form of food still much esteemed in the East. Perhaps it should be:

Curd of kine and milk of goats,
With fat of lambs and rams;
Herds of Bashan and he-goats,
With the kidney fat of wheat.

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15. [1] But Jeshurun [2] waxed fat, and kicked:
Thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art become sleek:
Then he forsook God which made him,
[3] And lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.[3]
16. They moved him [4] to jealousy with strange *gods*,
With abominations provoked they him [4] to anger.
1 Rev. 9:20 1 Cor. 10:20 17. They sacrificed unto demons, *which were* no God,
To gods whom they knew not,

[1] Sam. Gr. insert *So* (Gr. only) *Jacob ate and was satisfied.* [2] Gr. *the beloved.*
[3] Gr. *And departed from God his Saviour.* [4] Gr. *me.*

For **the kidney fat of wheat** see Ps. 81:16; 147:14. In the fifth line the Greek version reads the third person, which is probably correct unless the whole line is a later addition by some one who missed the wine in the list of blessings. And the blood of the grape thou didst drink as fiery (fermenting) wine.

15–18. Israel's ingratitude in view of this kindly care.

15. For the principle here involved see the classic Chap. 8. The versions Sam and Gr. have an additional line at the beginning.

Jacob ate and was filled.

Compare 31:20; Neh. 9:25. **Jeshurun**, an honorable title for Israel (33:5–26; Isa. 44:2); the word may contain a play upon "Israel" and a reference to *Yasher* (righteous); the context here gives it a reproachful ironical tone. **God**, here the word is *Eloah*, probably a late singular form from *Elohim*, which occurs in the Pent. only here and in v. 19.

Lightly esteemed, lit. *made a fool of*, or "treated as a senseless or irreligious person." **Rock of salvation**, 2 Sam. 22:47; Ps. 95:1.

16. **Jealousy**, see 4:24–25. **Abominations**, here according to the parallelism, foreign gods or idols, used in this sense, 2 Kgs. 23:13; Isa. 44:19.

17. **Demons**. Greek *daimonia* represents the Hebrew word *Shedim*, which occurs again only in a late Ps. 106:37, "Yea, they sacrificed their sons and daughters unto demons." The exact nature of the gods or demons thus named is not known. They are probably superstitious survivals or revivals from the ancient animistic beliefs, which included many superhuman beings

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To new *gods* that came up of late,
[1] Whom your fathers dreaded not.[1]
18. Of the Rock [2] that begat thee thou art unmindful,
And hast forgotten God that gave thee birth.
19. And the LORD saw *it*, and abhorred *them*,
Because of the provocation of his sons and his daughters.
20. And he said, I will hide my face from them,
I will see [3] what their end shall be:
For they are a very froward [4] generation,
Children in whom is no faith.[5]

[1] Gr. *Whom their fathers knew not.* [2] Gr. *God.* [3] Gr. *show, point out.* [4] SV perverse. [5] faithfulness.

that did not attain to the rank of gods. This is quite consistent with the fact that they are **new** in the sense of not having had any previous vital connection with Israel's faith. The fathers had not shuddered in the presence of these particular demons; they are not really divine; only silly people who do not understand the significance of Israel's history would pay any attention to such vain idols. **Dreaded**, another suggestion for the rendering of the word is *knew* or *perceived*, as in the Greek version.

18. A very bold figure, in which Yahweh is not only the father who brought the nation into existence, but also the mother who for Israel's sake has endured the birth-pangs; so completely does this people owe its very life to him that their infidelity seems incredible.

19–25. The consequence is that Yahweh must now come with the sternness of a righteous judge; the general effect is stated: *Yahweh saw this conduct and spurned his people because of vexation concerning his sons and daughters;* then in the following verses particulars of this judgment are given in the first person, with the reason why it stops short of utter destruction.

20. With poetic boldness and vividness Yahweh is represented as withdrawing his presence, leaving the nation to itself and then waiting in expectation to see what the end will be; the Greek translations have softened this down by giving, "*I will show what*, etc.," a rendering which simply requires a change in the punctuation of the Hebrew. The character given to the people here is just the opposite of that ascribed to God in v. 4.

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1 Cor. 10:22 Rom. 10:19; 11:11

21. They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God;
They have provoked me to anger with their vanities:
And I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people;
I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.
22. For a fire is kindled in mine anger,
And burneth unto the lowest pit,[1]
And [2] devoureth the earth with her increase,
And [2] setteth on fire the foundations of the mountains.
23. I will heap mischiefs upon them;
I will spend mine arrows upon them:
24. *They shall be* wasted with hunger, [3] and devoured with burning heat [3]

[1] m. Heb. SV, *Sheol*. [2] Sam. Gr. om. *and*. [3] Gr. *and with the devouring of birds* (m. Heb. *burning coals*).

21. The structure of the verse suggests the symmetry of judgment, the *law of like* that is in the heart of things. They have made him jealous with a no-god and vexed him with vanities (*i.e.*, idols), and he will make them jealous by means of a wild, barbarous people, who are not worthy to be called a people, and vex them by means of a nation that is senseless and impious, Ps. 74:18. It is not possible to make out any definite historical allusions. Compare St. Paul's use of the passage, Rom. 10:19.

22. The **fire** of Yahweh's **anger** which is specially directed against unfaithful Israel is here with poetic exaggeration represented as consuming the whole structure of the visible world. It reaches to the depths of the underworld (*Sheol*), devours the increase of the earth, and sets on fire the foundations of the mountains which are fixed in the sea, Jon. 2:6; Ps. 18:7; 24:2.

24–25. The **mischiefs** or *evils* are here specified, famine, pestilence, wild beasts, and war; the wasting influence or swift destruction of each is set forth in brief, biting phrases. The suggestive picture of the horrors of war in v. 25 needs no comment. **Burning heat**, *i.e.*, the fire-bolt, poetical name for the fiery darts sent by Yahweh, to which according to the popular imagination pestilential complaints are due; see Hab. 3:5, "And the fire-bolt proceedeth at his feet." In Phœnician the name of a god

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And bitter destruction;
And the teeth of beasts will I send upon them,
With the poison of crawling things of the dust.
25. Without shall the sword bereave,[1]
And in the chambers terror;
It shall destroy both young man and virgin,
The suckling with the man of gray hairs.
26. I said, I would scatter them afar,
I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men:
27. [2] Were it not that I feared the provocation of the enemy,[2]
Lest their adversaries should misdeem,[3]
Lest they should say, [4] Our hand is exalted,
And the LORD hath not done all this.[4]
28. For they are a nation void of counsel,
And there is no understanding in them.

[1] Gr. adds *them.* [2] Gr. *Were it not for the wrath of the enemy, lest they should live long.* [3] SV *judge amiss.* [4] Gr. *Our own high hand and not the Lord hath done all this.*

is derived from this word. **Bitter destruction**, poisonous, malignant epidemic. With the latter part of the verse compare Jer. 8:17.

26–33. Gives the turning-point, showing why judgment must not be carried to the extreme length of utter destruction. Yahweh's honor among the nations was at stake, they would have ascribed the extinction of Israel to their own superior power and unchecked ambition.

26. I should have said I will **scatter them afar**; the exact shade of meaning of the verb thus translated is uncertain; other suggestions are, I will *blow them away* or *cleave them in pieces.*

27. A striking verse with strong ascription of human feeling to Yahweh. He dreaded the vexation caused by the enemy, lest the **adversaries** of Israel **should misdeem**, *i.e., interpret falsely*, these calamities, treat them in a manner foreign to their real origin and natural intention, inferring from them Yahweh's inability to save and their own self-sufficient superiority.

28 f. Read in close connection with the foregoing, this descrip-

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29. [1] Oh that they were wise, that they understood this,[1]
That they would consider their latter end!
30. How should one chase a thousand,
And two put ten thousand to flight,
Except their Rock [2] had sold them,
And the LORD had delivered them up?
31. For their rock [3] is not as our Rock,[4]
Even our enemies themselves being judges.
32. For their vine is of the vine of Sodom,
And of the fields of Gomorrah:
Their grapes are grapes of gall,
Their clusters are bitter:
33. Their wine is the poison of dragons,[5]
And the cruel venom of asps.

[1] Gr. *they were not wise to understand.* [2] Gr. *God.* [3] Gr. *gods.* [4] Gr. *God.* [5] SV *serpents.*

tion of the nation destitute of insight and forethought must be taken to refer to the heathen enemy. It is possible, however, to apply it to Israel's lack of practical wisdom, but it seems more likely that vs. 30–31 are a parenthesis or interpolation, and that 32 continues the description of the enemy thus begun. **Void of counsel**, lit. *perishing so far as regards counsel.*

30. This and the following verse breaks the continuity of Yahweh's speech. It comes from a time of military disaster, and asks, How could a small number of people put to flight a great army? Surely that could not be because Israel's God was not able to help, it must be because for some reason he gave them up to defeat. Some of the people weak in faith and leaning towards superstition might believe that Yahweh's power had failed, at a critical hour, but those rightly instructed could not, for a moment, harbor such a thought; the faithful Israelite cherished the conviction that even the heathen must acknowledge the superiority of Israel's God; compare Ex. 14:25; 1 Sam. 4:8; Isa. 41:1–7.

32. Connects with 29 and refers to the nations. Their life, represented by the vine, is corrupt, its produce, their wine, poisonous. For Sodom and Gomorrah as types of extreme wickedness, see Isa. 1:10; 3:9; Jer. 23:14; Ezek. 16:46–49.

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34. Is not this laid up in store with me,
Sealed up [1] among my treasures? [1]
35. Vengeance is mine, and recompence,[2]
At the time when their foot shall slide:
For the day of their calamity is at hand,
And the things that are to come upon them [3] shall make haste.
36. For the LORD shall [4] judge his people,
And repent himself for his servants;
When he seeth that *their* power is gone,
And there is none *remaining*, shut up or left at large.

Rom. 12:17
Heb. 10:30

[1] m. *in my treasuries.* [2] Sam. Gr. *In the day of vengeance I will recompense.* [3] Gr. *you.* [4] SV *will.*

34–36. The wickedness of the nations will be punished and Yahweh will interpose on behalf of his people.

34. **This**, *i.e.*, the wickedness of the heathen nations, perhaps referring to the cruel deeds of the Chaldeans. Compare Job 14:17; Hos. 13:12. God keeps the sins stored up and at the suitable time will confront the sinner with them. **Treasures** should be *treasuries* or *treasure-chambers;* the word is often used of the storehouses for rain or snow, etc., 28:12; Jer. 10:13; Ps. 33:7; Job 38:22.

35. The reading of Sam. and Gr. is to be preferred here, as it carries on the connection in better form and makes good parallelism.

Against the day of vengeance and recompence,
Against the time when their foot slippeth.

In Rom. 12:19; Heb. 10:30 the words are differently applied; there it is a warning against taking vengeance into one's own hand, here Israel is not in a position to do that. This vengeance is thought of as in the immediate future; the time when God will award to the nations the things that he destined for them is near at hand. This expectation was strong towards the end of the Exile and in the later prophets.

36. **Judge his people**, *i.e.*, *will vindicate them against their foes*, because his pity has been awakened by their thoroughly desolate and helpless condition. "Neither fettered nor free remaineth," an alliterative and proverbial phrase of uncertain origin but meant

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37. And he shall say, Where are their gods,
The rock[1] in which they trusted;[2]
38. Which[3] did eat the fat of their sacrifices,
And[3] drank the wine of their drink offering?
Let them rise up and help you,
Let them be your protection.
39. See now that I, even I, am he,
And there is none with me:
I kill, and I make alive;
I have wounded, and I heal:
And there is none that can deliver out of my hand.

[1] Gr. om. *the rock.* [2] m. *took refuge.* [3] Gr. reads *ye.*

to show that all classes are included; see 1 Kgs. 14:10; for a similar mode of expression compare the phrase *the moist with the dry* in 29:19.

37–39. In the extremity of their need Israel's God will teach the nation the meaning of the real facts of life. His judgments have shown the utter helplessness of heathen gods.

37. After the judgment on the heathen and the salvation of Israel Yahweh is represented as asking in a scornful tone,

"Where are their gods,
The rock in whom they sought refuge?"

The rock: a title frequently used of the true God is here applied in sarcasm to the idols of the heathen, Jer. 2:38. The great movements of history and the real circumstances of life teach the people of Israel that their God alone is the Lord of the world and the real help in the time of need.

38. "Where are they that ate the fat of their sacrifices
And drank the wine of their drink-offerings?
Let them rise up and help you,
Let them be for a shelter over you."

39. In sharp contrast to the helplessness of these false gods, who merely possessed the power to absorb the coarse sacrifices of their worshippers, stands out the supreme divinity of Yahweh; he is God alone, there is none other that exerts effectively these divine powers. He can slay the enemies of Israel and give new life to the nation that he has chosen. **I, even I, am he.** For similar

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40. For I lift up my hand to heaven,
And say, As I live for ever,
41. If I whet [1] my glittering sword,[1]
And mine hand take hold on judgements;
I will render vengeance to mine adversaries,
And will recompense them that hate me.
42. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood,
And my sword shall devour flesh;
With the blood of the slain and the captives,
[2] From the head [3] of the leaders of the enemy.[2]

[1] m. Heb. *the lightning of my sword;* Gr. *my sword like lightning.* [2] m. *From the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.* [3] m. *the hairy head of the enemy.*

presentations of lofty monotheistic doctrine see Isa. 41:4; 43:10:13. It is national life that the passage is dealing with, not the resurrection or restoration of individuals, 1 Sam. 2:6; Hos. 6:1. Compare the great question addressed to Ezekiel, Can these bones live, Ezek. 37:3.

40–42. This living God will take vengeance on Israel's foes. This promise of help to Israel and vengeance on the enemy is given in a most solemn manner. Yahweh swears by himself (Heb. 6:13) and uses the gesture of one taking a binding obligation; his very life and honor is pledged to redeem such a promise.

41. When Yahweh once whets his **glittering sword**, the judgment will be completed in a scene of terrible slaughter, which involves the destruction, not of all Gentiles, but of those nations that have inflicted upon Israel the most cruel oppression. Such pictures of vengeance upon the heathen are found frequently in the later prophetic writings; Isa. 34:5 f.; 49:26; 63:3–6; Jer. 12:12; 46:10. The question might be raised why Yahweh should avenge the blood of his people when it has been shed, by his own arrangement, as a punishment for their sins? vs. 21–26. Elsewhere we find the view that the Assyrians and Chaldeans carry on this work in a spirit of ruthless barbarism and to an excessive degree, Isa. 10:7; Zech. 1:15. Later the view prevails that whoever attacks Israel attacks Yahweh and commits a deadly sin (Zech. 2:8). Such a view may be regarded as a reversion in a different form to the earlier tribal position denounced by Amos 3:2.

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Rom. 15:10
Rev. 16:10; 19:2

43. [1] Rejoice, O ye nations, *with* his people: [1]
For he will avenge the blood of his servants,
And will render vengeance to his adversaries,
And will make expiation for his land, for his people.

D^R 44. And Moses came and spake all the words of this
song in the ears of the people, he, and Hoshea [2] the
45. son of Nun. And Moses made an end of speaking
46. all these words to all Israel: and he said unto them,

[1] m. *Praise his people, ye nations* or *ye nations, his people;* Gr. inserts before l. 1. *Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, and let all the angels of God worship him,* and also further additions; cf. Heb. 1:6. [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. Vg. *Joshua.*

43. The nations are called upon to rejoice with Israel when vengeance is taken upon the foe. It may be that other nations have suffered at the hands of the cruel oppressors and so they may be expected to exult with Israel when such a cry is raised as "Babylon is fallen." The enemy has desecrated the sacred country by treading it or by pouring out innocent blood upon it, and so expiation is demanded. Thus concludes a noble poem which reflects some of the highest thoughts of Hebrew thinkers, the belief and hopes that have played a great part in instructing and inspiring the community in one of its darkest hours; it still remains as one of the noblest memorials from the past, showing that the strongest force in the life of a nation is the sense of moral responsibility which comes from a lofty faith in God.

44–47. This section is regarded either as a supplement to the song, or as a closing exhortation to keep the Law. Compare what has been said, 31:24. If the whole passage originally referred to the *song*, then **all these words** has taken the place of *all the words of this song*. If a change in the reference of these verses has taken place, we must regard the Greek version which in v. 44 has *the words of this law* instead of **the words of this song** as a later stage in the same process. It is possible, however, to take the other view, viz. that there was no prose conclusion to the song, and that v. 44 is simply an addition from 31:30; in this connection it is to be noted that Gr. repeats in this place 31:22, "So Moses wrote this song the same day and taught it to the children of Israel."

44. Where Moses came from at this stage is not clear. **Hoshea,** probably a scribal slip, as the versions have Joshua, which is the form used regularly in the Pentateuchal sources except Num. 13:8–16 (P).

46. The people are called to give the whole strength of their

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Set your heart unto all the words which I testify unto
you this day; which ye shall command your children,
47. to observe to do all the words of this law. For it is no
vain thing for you; because it is your life, and through
this thing ye shall prolong your days upon [1] the land,
whither ye go over [2] Jordan to possess it.
48. And the LORD spake unto Moses that selfsame day, P
49. saying, Get thee up into this mountain of Abarim,
unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab,

[1] SV *in*. [2] SV *the* Jordan.

understanding to the task of grasping the spiritual significance and practical bearing of this teaching. **Testify**, a strong word, to call on witnesses, see 4 : 26; 31 : 28. The importance of teaching and training the children according to the divine precepts is once more made the subject of emphatic appeal; see 4 : 9.

47. A great saying regarding God's word; it is not a vain or *empty* thing without significance or real strength, as are so many of the words of men; it is alive, full of meaning; through it the nation attains real life and abiding prosperity. With this should be compared the glowing description in Isa. 55 of the word of God, which is like unto the great forces of nature which never return empty or fail of their effect.

5. *Commandment concerning the Death of Moses;* 32 : 48–52

48–52. Moses was commanded to ascend Mount Nebo that he might die there. This passage belongs to the Priestly strata of the Pentateuch and is a duplicate of Num. 27 : 12–14, by the same writer or another of the same school. We must reckon with the possibility that the present passage once stood in the place occupied by the one in Num. which deals with the same subject; the latter would then be regarded as a condensation of vs. 48–52 made necessary by the rearrangement of the documents.

48. **That selfsame day.** One of P's standing expressions; Gen. 7 : 13; 17 : 23, etc. The day referred to is named in 1 : 3 (P), Num. 33 : 50 ff. (P).

49. **Get thee up into this mountain of Abarim,** exactly as in Num. 27 : 12. **Abarim** perhaps means *the parts beyond, i.e.* east of the Jordan, a range of the highlands of Moab sloping towards the Arabah and the Dead Sea, of which Nebo was an individual

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that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel
50. for a possession: and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered
51. unto his people: because ye trespassed against me in the midst of the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah of Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin: because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children
52. of Israel. For thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither into the land [1] which I give the children of Israel.[1]

[1] Gr. om. *which I give*, etc.

mountain. In Num. 33 : 47 (P), where we read " the mountain of Abarim in front of Nebo," Nebo may be the name of a city in the same locality; compare 3 : 17,27. Moses would scarcely need to be informed of the exact position of Nebo. For P's usual phrase, see Num. 22 : 1. The Hebrew form for I here and the phrase **for a possession** instead of *for an inheritance* is characteristic for P.

50. Similar in substance to Num. 27 : 13. **Gathered unto thy people**, a regular phrase of P used only by this writer in the O. T., Gen. 25 : 8; 35 : 29; Num. 20 : 24, etc. Probably the words **thy people** are here used in the primitive sense of father's kin. For Aaron's death, see Num. 20 : 22–27 (P). The position of Mt. Hor cannot be identified with any certainty. **In mount Hor**, the original has *in Hor the Mount*, and in this unusual order elsewhere in P.

51. **Trespassed against me**, or *brake forth with me*, a word belonging mainly to the Priestly school as represented by P, Ezek., and Chron. **Sanctified me not**, *did not treat me as holy;* did not pay to Yahweh the honor demanded by his nature and unique position. This is illustrated by Num. 20 : 10. In the word **sanctify** there is probably a play upon the similar sound in Kadesh. The wilderness of Zin, evidently a name for the territory near Kadesh, see 1 : 2; and compare Num. 33 : 36.

52. This verse does not occur in the parallel passage in Num. **Before thee**, lit., *from in front, i.e.* from a distance, afar off. The Greek has simply *opposite thou shalt see the land, but thou shalt not*

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33. And this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. JE

enter into it. For another reason why the prohibition was given, see 1 : 37.

6. *The Blessing of Moses;* Chap. 33

The poem that bears this name is quite different in character from the song contained in the previous chapter. The analysis of the present chapter is as follows: 1, The superscription attributing the Blessing to Moses; 2–5, 26–29, the framework in which the blessing is set; 6–25, a series of oracular utterances concerning the character and destiny of the different tribes. Except the first, each of these oracles or blessings is provided with a separate superscription; as there is nothing of this kind in Gen. 49, their originality may be questioned. The order of the tribes is not the usual one (compare Gen. 49; Exod. 1 : 2), and Simeon is missing altogether. Some Greek Mss. have, "And let Simeon be great in number," and some modern scholars have tried to restore the name of Simeon from the similar word *Shema* (hear) in v. 7. The more likely explanation is that Simeon is passed over in silence because at the time when this poem was composed this tribe had already been absorbed in Judah and in the clans dwelling south of Judah. Compare Judg. 1 : 3; Gen. 49 : 5 ff. As compared with the Blessing of Jacob, Gen. 49, these utterances are more eulogistic and optimistic and bear marks of a more advanced religious and ecclesiastical character.

In considering the question of date it is necessary to take separately the vs. 2–5, 26–29; this is no doubt of later origin than the main body of the chapter. This poem, which now serves as introduction and close for the series of oracles, belongs probably to the late Exilic period; it is similar to many of the compositions found in the Book of Psalms. It is not possible to fix with absolute accuracy the date of the Blessing, but the references to the condition of Israel and Judah point to a time in the first half of the eighth century B.C. It may have been handed down in the Elohistic document, that author having derived it from the priestly circles in the North; later it was rearranged and transferred to its present place. The text is in some places in poor condition, and in these cases the versions do not render much help; but when the different features of the oracles are carefully noted, they yield many interesting and helpful suggestions as to the hopes and ideals of those early days.

1. The superscription. This verse may originally have been connected with 31 : 23 (E). **Before his death**, compare Gen.

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2. And he said,
The LORD came from Sinai,
And rose from Seir unto them;[1]
He shined forth from mount Paran,
Jude 14 And he came from[2] the ten thousands of holy ones:[3]
At his right hand[4] was a fiery law unto them.[4]

[1] Gr. *us.* [2] Sam. Gr. Syr. Tar. Vg. *with* or *with him.* [3] m. Heb. *holiness.* [4] m. *was fire, a law;* or *were streams for them.* Gr. reads *were his angels with him.*

50 : 16 (E). It was believed that the veil of the future was often opened for those about to die, and that hence the last words were freighted with special knowledge and power. In this case there is the additional weight derived from the fact that Moses was in the fullest sense **the man of God.** This was a favorite designation of a prophet, but is applied to Moses again only in Josh. 14 : 6 and the *title* of Ps. 90.

2–5. First part of the Psalm or framework, the description of a theophany to be compared with those pictured in Judg. 5 : 4; Hab. 3 : 3; Ps. 68 : 8 f. Yahweh comes in majesty and assumes kingship over his people.

2. There are several difficulties in this short verse; on the whole the best result seems to come from the following translation:

Yahweh came from Sinai,
And from Seir beamed upon his people;
He shined forth from Mount Paran,
And came from Meribah-Kadesh,
From his right hand was a burning fire for them.

The fifth line is in the Hebrew unintelligible and it disturbs the balance of the poem, which has mostly four-lined stanzas. **Sinai:** for this mountain D uses the name Horeb; see 1 : 2–6. This does not refer to the giving of the Law when Yahweh came down upon Sinai, Exod. 19 : 18–20, but he came from Sinai, passing through the places named, to manifest his power to the people and inspire them in their struggles and battles. This mountain must have been a sacred region long before the Israelites came there. **Seir,** in Edom, a country generally regarded as hostile to Israel, yet a similar representation is found in Judg. 5 : 4:

"Yahweh when thou comest forth from Seir,
When thou marchedst from the field of Edom."

Compare also Hab. 3 : 3. The site of **Paran** is uncertain; according to 1 Kgs. 11 : 17 f. it lay between Midian and Egypt, but that

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3. Yea, he loveth the peoples;[1]
All his saints[2] are in thy hand:
And they sat down at thy feet;
Every one shall receive[3] of thy[4] words.
4. Moses commanded us a law,
An inheritance for the assembly of Jacob.

[1] m. *tribes;* Gr. *and he spared his people.* [2] m. *their holy ones.* [3] m. *received.*
[4] Gr. *his* (*words, the law which Moses commanded us*).

can scarcely be the Paran intended in 1 : 2. These geographical puzzles cannot be solved; of more importance for the history of religious thought is the fact that in these theophanies Yahweh is thought of *not* as descending from heaven, but as coming from these particular earthly localities. Another interesting point of this kind is that the Greek version reads, "From Mount Paran with myriads of Kadesh, and on his right were his angels with him," and upon this rests the later belief that the Law was given through the ministration of angels, Acts 7 : 53; Gal. 3 : 19; Heb. 2 : 2. This cannot be drawn from the Hebrew text, as if the word in question is translated myriads, it must be, as in RV, *from* the ten thousands.

3. This verse is even more difficult.

"Yea he loveth his people,
All his saints are in his hand."

This couplet declares Yahweh's love for Israel and his care for those consecrated to his service. It is not possible to give a satisfactory translation of the next two lines; RV makes the best of a difficult text in which there are unintelligible words and irregular phrases. The following conjecture is worthy of consideration:

"He holds fast thy lot;
And keeps his covenant with thee."

4. (A law Moses commanded us)
His possession is the assembly of Jacob.

The first of these two lines is probably an explanatory note, as it is not in harmony with the fact that Moses is the speaker and there is a change of person; the second line connects quite well with what has gone before. The word inheritance or *possession*, which occurs again only in Exod. 6 : 8 and six places in Ezek., means an earthly possession, and refers no doubt to the land of Canaan. The form of the word assembly used here is found again only in Neh. 5 : 7.

5. And he [1] was king in Jeshurun,
When the heads of the people were gathered,
All the tribes of Israel together.
6. Let Reuben live, and not die;
[2] Yet let his men be few.[2]
7. And this is *the blessing* of Judah: and he said,

[1] m. *there was a king.* Gr. reads *and he shall be ruler over (in) the beloved one.*
[2] m. *And let not his men,* etc. So Gr. *Let him be many in number.* SV *Nor* let, etc.

5. And he became king in Jeshurun,
When the heads of the people were gathered together,
The tribes of Israel (came) together.

The most probable meaning of this is that Yahweh became king on some occasion when the chiefs of the nation were assembled together; the time might be supposed to be when they gathered round Sinai to receive the law, or more likely, as we have read at the beginning that he came *from* Sinai, when they were gathered in battle array to defend their national existence, then their God manifested his presence and led them to victory, Exod. 15: 18; Isa. 33: 22.

Jeshurun, the use of the title is meant to place the nation in a favorable light; see the note on 32: 15 and observe that this title occurs in v. 26, where we find the continuation of this psalm.

6–25. The oracles concerning the different tribes.

Reuben.

Let Reuben live and not die,
But let his men be few.

This couplet deals with the fate of Reuben the firstborn (Gen. 49: 3); translated thus literally it cannot be said to contain much "blessing"; to bring anything of that nature out of it we must suppose that when it was written this tribe was on the point of extinction, with all its glorious activities in the past, and the desire is expressed that it may not completely vanish. As a matter of fact, we know that this tribe early lost its military strength and political importance. Its indifference at a great national crisis is mentioned in a reproachful tone, Judg. 5: 15; many of the cities assigned to it appear to have passed into the possession of Moab. A similar fate seems to have overtaken Simeon, whose possessions were absorbed in the territory of Judah.

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Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah,
And bring him in unto his people:
[1] With his hands he contended for himself;[1]
And thou shalt be an help against his adversaries.

8. And of Levi he said,
Thy Thummim and thy Urim are with thy godly one,[2]
Whom thou didst prove at Massah,
With whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah;

[1] m. *Let his hands be sufficient for him* (or *for them*). [2] m. *him whom thou lovest.* Gr. reads (l. 1) *Give to Levi his manifestations, and his truth to the holy one.*

7. **Judah.**

Hear O Yahweh Judah's cry
And bring him back to his people;
With thy hands contend for him,
And be to him a help against his foes.

This is evidently written by an Israelite from the point of view of the North Kingdom and the great schism; Judah is in danger and needs the sympathy of his brethren and the help of his God. It is not possible to say what the historical situation here referred to actually was; it may have been some severe conflict with Syria or Edom, 2 Kgs. 12:18; 14:7. It is clear that Israel properly so called is the more important kingdom and that devout Israelites look towards Judah in a spirit of brotherly sympathy.

8–11. **Levi.** The importance of Levi is seen in the fact that his blessing runs through the next four verses. It should be noted that in Gen. 49:5 there is no trace of the ecclesiastical character here ascribed to this tribe.

8. Give Levi thy Thummim,
And thy Urim to thy favorite,
Whom thou didst prove at Massah;
With whom Thou contendest at the waters of Meribah.

Thummim and Urim, elsewhere always in the reverse order, as Exod. 28:30; Lev. 8:8, etc., the sacred lot by which divine decisions were given by the priest, perhaps one representing "Yes" and the other "No." Compare 1 Sam. 14:41; Gr. "If this iniquity be in me or in Jonathan my son, O Yahweh God of Israel give Thummim." It is difficult to connect this verse with the narrative in Exod. 17:1–7; Num. 20:1–13; compare

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9. Who said of his father, and of his mother, I have not
seen him;[1]
Neither did he acknowledge his brethren,
Nor knew he his own children:
For they have observed thy word,
And keep thy covenant.
10. They shall teach Jacob thy judgements,[2]
And Israel thy law:
They shall put incense[3] before thee,[3]
And whole burnt offering upon thine altar.
11. Bless, LORD, his substance,
And accept the work of his hands:

[1] Gr. *thee.* [2] SV *ordinances.* [3] m. Heb. *in thy nostrils;* Gr. *wrath.*

Deut. 6 : 16; 9 : 22; in those accounts it is the people who *proved* Yahweh at Massah and contended with him at Meribah. Some other version of the incidents at these places, which showed how the faithfulness of the tribe of Levi stood the test, may have been in existence.

9. Probably there is here a reference to Exod. 32 : 28. When it comes to a question of religious duty the men of this tribe allow physical relationship and social ties to fall into the background. Some would explain it with a special reference to the judicial action against heresy and idolatry as in 17 : 8 f., but it probably has a more general reference. Something of the same spirit is demanded of all true Israelites in 13 : 6 f. Compare Lev. 21 : 11; Matt. 10 : 37. If this means that the service of God, in the highest sense, viz. the pursuit of righteousness, is to have the first claim, it will be an inspiring obligation; but mixed with ignorance and spiritual pride it may yield a fiery sectarian fanaticism.

11. They teach Jacob thy judgements,
And Israel thine instruction,
They place incense in thy nostril,
And whole offerings upon thine altar.

Here the priestly duties are set forth fully though in brief form. They give decisions in legal cases and instruction bearing upon daily conduct and the order of worship; in the worship they stand before God as the representatives of the people. In harmony with the Deuteronomic standpoint this refers to the whole tribe of

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Smite through the loins of them that rise up against him,
And of them that hate him, that they rise not again.

12. Of Benjamin he said,
The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by him;
He [1] covereth him all the day long,
And he dwelleth between his shoulders.

[1] Gr. *God.*

Levi and not to the sons of Aaron in the narrower sense. The desire is here strongly expressed that the sacred tribe may find favor with the God of Israel, success in its varied work, and victory over all rivals and enemies. These verses show that at the time the Blessings were written the tribe of Levi had attained to a definite ecclesiastical position and claimed the monopoly of priestly functions, though they also suggest that this position was not altogether free from attack. The history of the tribe cannot be traced clearly from the beginning, but it is plain that a different view is given of it here from what we find in Gen. 49; and here as elsewhere in Deut. the distinction between the Levites and the priests, the sons of Aaron, is not yet recognized.

12. **Benjamin.** In Gen. 49: 27 the reference to this tribe is equally short.

> "Benjamin is a wolf that raveneth.
> In the morning he shall devour the prey
> And at even he shall divide the spoil."

These words set forth the boldness and bravery of the tribe in war. The present oracle, on the other hand, reflects a time of peace and prosperity.

> Benjamin is the favorite of Yahweh,
> He dwells in security all the days;
> The Most High is his protector,
> And dwells between his mountain slopes.

Beloved or *favorite* is a strong word; it is applied to the whole people, Jer. 11: 15, to the faithful servants of Yahweh, Ps. 60: 7, and Solomon receives a similar title, 2 Sam. 12: 25. That the child Benjamin is regarded with such tender affection by Jacob may have influenced the poet in his choice of this special term of endearment. Many think that the place of Yahweh's dwelling here referred to is Jerusalem, which is treated as belonging to the

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13. And of Joseph he said,
Blessed of the LORD be his land;
For the precious things of heaven, for the dew,
And for the deep that coucheth beneath.
14. And for the precious things of the fruits of the sun,
And for the precious things of the growth of the moons,
15. And for the chief things [1] of the ancient mountains,

[1] Gr. *From the top of the ancient mountains, and from the top of*, etc.

territory of Benjamin, Josh. 18 : 28; but it is possible that the reference may be to Bethel, the chief sanctuary of the North Kingdom, Josh. 18 : 13.

13–17. **Joseph.** The fortunes of these tribes (Ephraim and Manasseh) are treated at greater length, as is natural from the pen of an Israelite of the North; the blessing resembles in many phrases the oracle of Gen. 49 : 25, 26, and one may have been influenced by the other. These tribes possess a fertile soil and are remarkable for unconquerable military strength.

13. **Choice fruits**, that which is noble and dignified, in the O. T. only of fruits, Cant. 4 : 15–16; 7 : 14. Here it may have a somewhat wider meaning including the forces of nature which produce fruitfulness and noble gifts.

The lordliest things that come from heaven above,
And from the water-floods that couch beneath.

The reference is to the rain and dew from heaven and the water from the springs below. **Coucheth** like an animal; see 29 : 20; Gen. 4 : 7. The word used for **deep** is a similar one to the name of the great Babylonian sea-monster. It is a striking phrase used also in Gen. 49 : 25 and not likely to be original in both places.

14. The words corresponding to this verse, Gen. 49 : 25, are merely

Blessings of the breasts, and of the womb.

Originally there may have been a much closer resemblance between the two passages. Our present text can only be interpreted of the beneficent effect of light upon the world of nature, in quickening its growth and enriching its produce.

15. The security and strength of Joseph is guaranteed by the fact that he possesses:

The best produce from the primæval mountains,
And the choice fruits of the everlasting hills.

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And for the precious things of the everlasting hills,
16. And for the precious things of the earth and the fulness thereof,
And the good will of him that dwelt in the bush:
Let *the blessing* come upon the head of Joseph,
And upon the crown of the head of him [1]that was separate from[1] his brethren.
17. [2]The firstling of his bullock,[2] majesty is his;
And his horns are the horns of the wild-ox.[3]
With them he shall push [4] the peoples all of them,
even the ends of the earth:
And they are the ten thousands of Ephraim,
And they are the thousands of Manasseh.

[1] m. *that is prince among*; Gr. *who was glorified above.* [2] m. *His firstling bullock*, SV *The firstling of his herd.* [3] Gr. *unicorn.* [4] m. *gore.*

16. **Him that dwelt in the bush.** A reference to the revelation made to Moses, Ex. 3 : 2–4. The word for Sinai and the word here used for thorn-bush are very similar and it has been suggested that the former may be meant here. In favor of this is the fact that the word *dwell* suggests something more permanent than the divine appearance at the burning bush. It is probable, however, that a reference to One who dwelt in the thorn-bush meant more to the ancient Israelite than we can now understand; it is only faint reminiscences of these primitive beliefs that now remain in poetic form. **Separate**, here refers not to priestly consecration, but to princely dignity; it is in worldly power and political superiority that Joseph is distinguished above his brethren.

17. The poet brings the blessing of Joseph to a close by magnifying the warlike strength of these two tribes; with rich exuberance of language he has spoken throughout of Joseph's wealth and power; he now declares that this consists in the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh with their numerous clans and families. The general intention is clear to express the powers of this people under the figure of a young bullock that possesses majestic strength, and like the famous wild-ox of ancient times treads down with wild fury all that oppose his onward march. The difficulty is to fix the exact personal reference; some apply to Ephraim (Gen. 48 : 14), the ancients favored Joshua, and the moderns Jeroboam II, supposed to be the monarch reigning when the poem was written.

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18. And of Zebulun he said,
Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out;
And Issachar, in thy tents.
19. [1] They shall call the peoples unto the mountain; [1]
There shall they offer sacrifices of righteousness:
For they shall suck the abundance of the seas,
[2] And the hidden treasures of the sand.[2]
20. And of Gad he said,
Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad;

[1] Gr. reads *They shall utterly destroy the nations; ye shall call (men) there, etc.*
[2] Gr. reads *And the merchandise of them that dwell by the sea-shore.*

18–19. **Zebulun and Issachar.** Here two tribes are grouped together, though they represent two different sides of life,—the wanderings and adventures connected with the sea, and the quieter, more regular occupations of agriculture; Gen. 49: 13–15 divides their tasks in a similar manner, with a slightly contemptuous reference to the one who has chosen the more prosaic form of service. These two tribes are represented as taking part zealously in the great gathering for battle celebrated in the song of Deborah, Judg. 5: 14. Here we are told that they celebrated religious services and offered sacrifices at a mountain sanctuary, perhaps Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18); these sacrifices are offered in the right spirit of worship to God and friendliness to their neighbors, they are hence **sacrifices of righteousness.** To these religious services **peoples** are invited, not Israelites merely, but other neighboring tribes. It is supposed that in those early days great fairs were held which were attended by people from a wide surrounding district and which served both commercial and religious purposes. This kind of worship could not be treated with any tolerance from a Deuteronomic point of view, but this poem carries the reader back to earlier times when the religious life of the nation had a rich variety of manifestations and the doctrine of one central sanctuary was not fully accepted. The tribes are to be enriched by fisheries and sea-trade as well as by various forms of glassware.

20–21. **Gad.** In Gen. 49, there is a very brief reference to this tribe in the following words:

> Gad, a troop shall press upon him:
> But he shall press upon their heel.

A couplet which expresses the warlike nature of the tribe in a less bold and heroic fashion than is done in the present passage,

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He dwelleth as a lioness,
And teareth the arm, yea, the crown of the head.
21. And he provided [1] the first part for himself,
For there was the lawgiver's [2] portion reserved;
And he came *with* the heads of the people,
[3] He executed the justice of the LORD,[3]
And his judgements with Israel.
22. And of Dan he said,
Dan is a lion's whelp,
That leapeth forth from Bashan.
23. And of Naphtali he said,

[1] m. *chose*, Heb. *saw*. [2] *m a ruler's*. [3] Gr. reads *The Lord executed justice.* SV He executeth the *righteousness* of Jehovah and his *ordinances* with Israel.

where **Gad** is compared to the ravening lioness. See the comparison of Judah to a lion, Gen. 49 : 9.

21. Perhaps this stood originally as follows:

He looked out a first part for himself,
For there was a portion reserved for him;
He performed the righteousness of Yahweh,
And his ordinances along with Israel.

The reference is to Num. 32 : 6–16 f, where the tribe of Gad, having received a noble portion of territory east of the Jordan, engaged to help their brethren in the struggle against the Canaanite. The historical facts may not be quite clear, but there is a great living idea of mutual obligation and helpfulness among brethren of the same blood and faith.

22. This oracle is exceedingly short and simple; it is more complimentary than the statement in Gen. 49 : 17, where the same tribe is compared to a *serpent in the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horses' heels*, etc. There is a bare possibility that in the reference to Dan as lion's whelp there is a play upon the name Laish (lion), the earlier name of the city Dan. It is the lion's whelp, not Dan, that springs forth from Bashan; that neighborhood with its thickly wooded district might well afford shelter for such wild animals. We have little historical information about this tribe except that a body of Danites moved from their earlier settlements in the southwest of Ephraim to the north and seized Laish at the foot of Hermon, Judg. 8.

23. **Naphtali.** This tribe is found in a specially favorable posi-

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O Naphtali, satisfied with favour,
And full with the blessing of the LORD:
Possess thou the west [1] and the south.
24. And of Asher he said,
Blessed be Asher with children; [2]
Let him be acceptable unto his brethren,
And let him dip his foot in oil.
25. Thy bars [3] shall be iron and brass;
And as thy days, so shall thy strength be.
26. There is none like unto [4] God, O Jeshurun,[4]
Who rideth upon the heaven for thy help,
And in his excellency on the skies.

[1] m. *sea.* [2] m. *above sons.* [3] m. *shoes*, so Gr. *his sandal.* [4] Gr. *the God of the beloved.*

tion; the favor of Israel's God has bestowed upon him a goodly heritage.

Sea and southland he has in possession.

The sea is the lake of Genesareth; the South is uncertain, perhaps it means the pleasant parts adjoining the lake, Isa. 9 : 1.

24. **Asher.** See Gen. 49 : 20. Here there is a play upon the name which means blessed. The first line should read:

Blessed be Asher *above* sons.

That is, let the happiness be fulfilled in his own life which gave to him his name at his birth, Gen. 30 : 13; may he have a noble position in Israel's family. Ordinarily men use oil carefully when they anoint themselves, but his territory is so fruitful in olives that he can apply it lavishly.

25. He will be strong to resist invasion, and it is to be hoped that instead of diminishing in strength with age his power may abide and increase.

26–29. The close of the Exilic psalm which serves as a framework for the blessing. The first line of v. 26 seems to be missing; in this verse the name **Jeshurun** occurs again as in the earlier part of this poem. The RV renders correctly the Hebrew version, **There is none like unto God, O Jeshurun**; but it is better to read with the other versions, *There is none like the God of Jeshurun;* this involves only a slight change in the text and gives

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27. The eternal God is *thy* dwelling place,
And underneath are the everlasting arms:
And he thrust out the enemy from before thee,
And said, Destroy.

28. And Israel dwelleth in safety,
The fountain [1] of Jacob alone,
In a land of corn and wine;
Yea, his heavens drop down dew.

29. Happy art thou, O Israel:
Who is like unto thee, a people saved by the LORD,
The shield of thy help,
And that is [2] the sword of thy excellency!

[1] Gr. *land*. [2] SV om. *that is*.

a more suitable thought that it is the God of Israel who is unique in character and glory. For the manner of Yahweh's coming on the storm clouds, see Ps. 18:11; 68:34; 104:3. **And in his excellency**, etc., or more literally *dignity*. The parallelism would lead us to expect rather *for thy exaltation*.

27. As the text stands we must interpret that the God of the olden time was a refuge or dwelling for Israel (Ps. 90:1) and supported him with arms that were strong and never weary (Hos. 11:3; Isa. 33:2). He drove out the enemy so that they could take possession of the land, and commanded the Israelites to exterminate the foes that were dangerous to their national life and hurtful to their religion. This is the review of one who lived long after the heroic age to which allusion is made. The second line is difficult in the original; a plausible suggestion is *And he broke the power of the wicked*.

28. At this stage of the people's history the lessons have been fully learned that the blessings of this good land came not from the local Baals, but from the God of Israel, and that religious security demands a certain separateness of character and life on the part of those who during their history have been the subjects of such divine care and guidance; see Gen. 27:28; Num. 23:9.

29. Having such a powerful God, Israel is a people called to a unique position among the nations of the world. Their God is a shield to defend them and a sword to attack their foes, hence their enemies shall come to them with feigned flattering homage and

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And thine enemies shall submit themselves[1] unto thee;
And thou shalt tread upon their high places.[2]

P 34. And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against
DR Jericho. And the LORD shewed him all the land of
2. Gilead, unto Dan; and all Naphtali, and [3] the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah,
3. unto the hinder[4] sea; and the South, and the Plain of the valley of Jericho the city of palm trees, unto
JE 4. Zoar. And the LORD said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and

[1] m. *yield feigned obedience;* Gr. *speak falsely.* [2] Gr. *neck.* [3] Gr. Syr. add *all.* [4] m. *western.*

they will ride in conquering power over them. Surely, even if clothed in somewhat worldly forms, a wonderful faith to be cherished by a people in its days of defeat and darkness.

7. *The Death of Moses*

1–4. To Moses, before his death, there is given a view of the land. He viewed the land from Mt. Nebo, having ascended **from the plains** (steppes) **of Moab.** "*Steppes*" or "*desert land of Moab*" a phrase peculiar to P, Josh. 13 : 32, and several times in Num. **Nebo**, a mountain in the Abarim range, situated in the tableland of Moab, east of the Jordan. **Pisgah** is the name used by JE and D for the same mountain. See on 3 : 27 and cf. Num. 21 : 20. In v. 2 Moses takes in at one glance the whole range of Israel's future territory from north to south and from east to west. This, of course, is a poetic statement; the noble view possible from the mountain peak is extended imaginatively in all directions. The fact that the Samaritan version reads simply, "And the Lord showed him all the land from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates even unto the utmost sea," shows that the tradition varied in this particular (cf. 11 : 24). The detailed description here given is probably an expansion of the original text.

3. "**And the South** land, the Oval (of the Jordan), **the Plain** of Jericho, etc." The site of Zoar is not certain.

4. The first half of the verse is the promise as in Exod. 33 : 1, but Moses himself is not to see its fulfilment for reasons given in 1 : 33.

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unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I
have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou
5. shalt not go over thither. So Moses the servant of D[1]
the LORD died there in the land of Moab,[1] according
6. to the word of the LORD. And he buried him[2] in
the valley in the land of Moab over against Beth-
peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this
day.
7. And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old P
when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural
8. force abated. And the children of Israel wept for
Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days
of weeping in the mourning for Moses were ended.
9. And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of
wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him:
and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and
10. did as the LORD commanded Moses. And there hath JE

[1] Gr. om. *in the land of Moab.* [2] m. *he was buried.*

5–6. In this region Moses died and was buried by Yahweh, *in the ravine in front* of **Beth-peor** (see 3 : 29; 4 : 46). "**In the land of Moab,**" lacking in the Greek version, may be an explanatory addition to emphasize the fact that Moses did not die in Canaan. That Moses died, **according to the word of Yahweh**, lit., *upon the mouth of Yahweh*, was in the early days interpreted to mean that he died by "the kiss of God." Though no man knows his grave there has been much speculation concerning the death of Moses and round this subject a mass of apocryphal literature has gathered.

7–9. The mourning for Moses and the appointment of his successor. He maintained his *freshness* to the last. But cf. the different view, 31 : 2. As to the length of the mourning, cf. a similar statement concerning Aaron, Num. 20 : 29 (P). His successor possessed the spirit of wisdom because he had been consecrated in the ceremony which P mentions elsewhere, Num. 27 : 18–23; Lev. 1 : 4; Num. 8 : 10–12.

10. He does not, however, stand on the same plane as Moses, **whom Yahweh knew** with perfect intimacy. (Gen. 18 : 19;

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not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses,
D[2] 11. whom the LORD knew face to face: in all the signs
and the wonders, which the LORD sent him to do in
the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants,
12. and to all his land; and in all the mighty hand, and
in all the great terror, which Moses wrought in the
sight of all Israel.

Amos. 3 : 2), there are successors similar in spirit but not equal in rank. This close communion with God made Moses a unique messenger of God, armed with special powers for the deliverance and leadership of Israel; using these powers to create a new nation and inspire it with a nobler religious idea, he has made an everlasting name.

Thus closes one of the most remarkable books of the Jewish Canon, with a narrative of the death of the great leader, drawn from a variety of sources. Probably all the chief documents had an account of the end of this great career, and in this short chapter they are all drawn upon for some distinctive features, and later scholars give brief expansions and explanations. While criticism leads us to modify the traditional view which ascribed to the pen of Moses the whole written Law, it reminds us first that Moses was indeed a great national leader and in a real sense the founder of Hebrew religion; and second, this composite figure given to us by the documents as now arranged presents a personality of ideal features and magnificent proportions which has exerted a tremendous influence on the world's literature and its religious life; linked with the name of Moses there is a rich heritage of sacred tradition and noble inspiration, to which we are indebted for much that is most attractive and helpful in our conception of God's action in history and in human life. As we examine carefully these ancient records, we are taken back to the time when men were beginning to realize that the study of the past is needful to the interpretation of the living present; we see them piece together with loving care the fragments of their scanty records; and while they thus show their eager desire for a knowledge of the facts, they teach us the importance of reading those facts in the right light, that is, in the light of that Divine Presence which alone gives meaning to human history and hope to human life.

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APPENDIX

Important Dates in Hebrew History and Literature

The Exodus from Egypt, about 1250.
The Song of Deborah.
Early Poems and Laws.
The Beginning of the Monarchy — Saul, 1030.
The United Kingdom, 1010.
The "Song of the Bow," 2 Sam. 1 : 19 ff.
The Coronation of Solomon, 975.
Solomon's Statement at the Dedication of the Temple, 1 Kings. 8 (Greek).
The Blessing of Jacob, Gen. 49 : 1 ff.
The Division of the Kingdom, 937.
The Book of the Wars of Yahweh.
The Book of the Upright.
The Beginnings of Written History.
The Book of the Covenant.
The Work of Elijah and Elisha, 875–795.
The Narratives concerning Elijah and Elisha, 850–750.
The Yahwist Writings, from 850.
The Elohist History, about 750.
The Reign of Jeroboam II, 781–740.
The Blessing of Moses, Deut. 33, about 800.
The Death of Uzziah, about 730.
The Prophets of the Assyrian Period, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah, 750–690.
The Destruction of Samaria, 722.
Manasseh's Reactionary Reign, 686–644.
The Union of J and E, about 650.
The Call of Jeremiah, 627.
The Deuteronomic Reformation, 621.
The First Captivity.
Ezekiel's Ministry, 597.
The Holiness Code.
Deutero-Isaiah, about 546.
Capture of Babylon by Cyrus, 538.

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Rebuilding of the Temple, 520–516.
Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, 520.
Promulgation of the Priestly Legislation, 444.
Ruth, Joel, Jonah, Job.
Compilation of the Psalter, 450–150.
Ecclesiastes, about 200.
Daniel, about 164.
Esther, about 130.

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INDEX

In the following index of topics parallel places from the other documents of the *Pentateuch* are cited; and where there are similar laws of the Code of Hammurabi, these are referred to by the abbreviation C. of H., and the number of the paragraph in Johns' English Edition is given.

Aaron, death of, 10:6; 32:50; Num. 20.
Abarim, Mt. range, 32:49; Num. 27:12; 33:47 f.
Abib, 16:1; Exod. 13:4; 23:15; 34:18.
Amalek, 25:17; Exod. 17:8 ff.; Num. 24:20.
Amen, 27:15; Num. 5:22.
Ammonites, 2:20; 23:3.
Amorites, 1:7; 7:1; 20:17; Gen. 15:16; 48:22; Num. 21:13, 21, etc.
Anakim, 1:28; 2:10; Num. 13:28–33.
Arabah, 1:1; 2:8; 11:30.
Ark, making of, 10:1 ff.; Exod. 31:1 ff.; 37:1.
Arnon, 2:24; Num. 21:14; 22:36.
Asher, 27:13; 33:24; Gen. 30:13; 49:20.
Asherah, 7:5; 12:3; 16:21; cf. Lev. 26:1.
Avenger of blood, 19:6–12; Num. 35:19 ff.

Baal-peor, 4:3; Num. 25:3–5.
Bashan, 3:1; 32:14.
Bastard, 23:2.
Benjamin, 27:12; 33:12; Gen. 49:27.
Beth-peor, 3:29; 4:46; 34:6.
Betrothal, 20:7; 22:23 ff.; 28:30; Exod. 22:16.
Blood, not to be eaten, 12:16, 23 ff.; Gen. 9:4; Lev. 3:17; 7:26; 17:10 f.; 19:26.
Booths, feast of, 16:13; 31:10; Exod. 23:16; 34:22; Lev. 23; Num. 29.
Bribery, 10:17; 16:19; 27:25; Exod. 23:8.

Caleb, 1:36; Num. 14:24–30.
Children, teaching, 4:10; 6:7–20; 11:19; 31:13.
Cities of Refuge, 4:41; 19; Exod. 21:12 ff.; Num. 35:9 ff.
Covenant, 4:13; 10:8; 29:9; Gen. 15:18; Exod. 24:8; 34:27, etc.

Dan, 33:22; Gen. 49:17.
Dathan and Abiram, 11:6; Num. 16.
Decalogue, 5; Exod. 20.
Devotion (Ban), 2:34; 7:2; 13:15; Exod. 22:20; Num. 21:2.
Divination, 18:10; Lev. 19:26; Num. 22:7; 23:23.
Divorce, 24:1; C. of H. 137, 138.
Dowry (Bride-price), 22:29; Gen. 34:12; Exod. 22:16; C. of H. 160 f.
Dreams, 13:1; Gen. 20:3; 31:11; Num. 12:6.

Ebal, 11:29; 27:4–13.
Edom and Moab, 2:1 ff.; 23:3; Num. 20:14–21; 21:4–20.

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Elders, 5:23; 19:12; 27:1; 29:10; 31:9–38; Exod. 3:16–18; 4:29; 24:1–14.
Ephraim, 33:17; Gen. 48:13.
Eunuchs, 23:1.

Festivals, 16; Exod. 13:23–34; Lev. 23; Num. 28–29.
Firstfruits, 18:4; 26:1 ff.; Exod. 23:19; 34:26; Lev. 23:17; Num. 18:12.
Firstlings, 15:19; Exod. 22:29; Num. 18:15.
Foods, forbidden, 14; Lev. 11.

Gad, 3:12; 33:20; Gen. 49:19.
Gates, 12:12, some 25 times and only again in Pent., Exod. 20:10.
Ger (stranger or sojourner), 1:16; 10:19; 14:21; Exod. 20:10; 22:21; 23:9–12.
Gerizim, 11:29; 27:12.
Gilgal, 11:30.
Gleaning, 24:19; Lev. 19:9; 23:22.
Golden calf, worship of, 9; Exod. 32.

High places, 12:2; Num. 33:52.
Host of heaven, 4:19; 17:3.
Horeb, 1:6; 4:10–15; 5:2; 9:8; 18:16; 29:1; Exod. 3:1; 17:6; 33:6.

Image worship, 4:16; 5:8; 7:25; 9:16; 27:15; 29:17; 28:64; Exod. 20:4; 34:17; Lev. 19:4; 26:1.
Incense, 33:10; Num. 16:6 f.; 16:40.
Incest, 22:30; 27:20, 22, 23; C. of H. 154–158.
Interest, 23:20; Exod. 22:25; Lev. 25:36; C. of H. 49; 50; 100 times.
Issachar, 33:18; Gen. 49:14.

Jair, 2:14; Num. 32:41.
Jealous (God), 4:24; 5:9; 6:15; 32:21; Exod. 20:5; 34:14.
Jericho, 34:1, 3.
Jeshurun, 32:15; 33:5, 26.
Joseph, 33:13; Gen. 49:22.
Joshua, 1:38; 3:28; 31:3, 23; Exod. 17:14; 24:13.
Judah, 33:7; Gen. 49:8.
Judges, appointment of, 1:9 ff.; Exod. 18; Num. 11:14 ff.

Kadesh, 1:46; 32:51; 33:2; Num. 13:26; 27:14.
Kingdom, law of the, 17:14.

Landmarks, 19:14; 27:17.
Leavened bread, 16:3, 4; Exod. 23:15, 18; Lev. 23:6.
Leprosy, 24:8; 28:35; Lev. 13–14.
Levi, 10:9; 33:8; Gen. 49:5.
Levirate marriage, 25:5–10; Gen. 38.
Liability for neglect, 22:8; Exod. 21:33; C. of H. 229.
Loans, 15:16; 24:6–12; Exod. 22:26; C. of H. 117, 241.
Lost property, 22:1; Exod. 23:4; C. of H. 9.

Manasseh, 3:13; 33:17.
Manna, 8:3, 16; Exod. 16:15, 33, 34, 35; Josh. 5:12.
Manslaughter and murder, 19:1–13; 21:1–9; 27:24, 25.
Man-stealing, 24:7; Exod. 21:16; C. of H. 14.
Mantle, 24:13; Exod. 22:26.
Massah, 6:16; 9:22; Exod. 17:2, 7.
Moses, death of, 34.

Naphtali, 33:23; Gen. 49:21.
Nebo, 32:49; 34:1; Num. 32:3, 38.
Negeb (the South), 1:7; 34:3; Gen. 20:1; 24:6; Num. 13:17.

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Oath to the fathers, 1:8; 29:12; Gen. 22:16.
Og, 1:4; 3:1 f.; Num. 21:33.

Paran, 1:1; 33:2; Gen. 21:21; Num. 10:12; 13:3, 26.
Passover, 16:1–8; Exod. 12:23; 34:25; Lev. 23:5; Num. 9.
Peaceofferings, 12:6; 18:3; 27:7; Lev. 7:15.
Pillar, 7:5; 12:3; 16:22; Lev. 26:1.
Pisgah, 3:27; 4:49; 34:1; Num. 23:14.
Primogeniture, 21:15–17; C. of H. 165.
Prophets, false, 13:1; true, 18:15.
Punishment, corporal, 22:18; 25:1–3; C. of H. 202, sixty strokes.

Rebellious son, 21:18; 27:16; Exod. 21:15; Lev. 20:9; C. of H. 195.
Release, year of, 15:1–6; 31:10; Exod. 23:10; Lev. 25.
Rephaim, 2:11, 20; 3:11, 13; Gen. 15:20.
Reuben, 3:12, 16; 33:6; Gen. 49:3.

Seduction, 22:23 ff.; Exod. 22:16; C. of H. 130.
Siege, 20:10 ff.
Sihon, 2:30; Num. 21:21.
Simeon, 27:12; Gen. 49:5.
Sinai, 33:2; Exod. 19:2.
Slavery, 15:12–18; Exod. 21:2; C. of H. 119.
Spies, 1:19; Num. 20:14 ff.

Taberah, 9:22; Num. 11:1–3.
Tithes, 14:22; 26:12 ff.; Lev. 27; Num. 18.

Wilderness, 8:2; 29:5.
Witness, law of, 17:6; 19:15 ff.; Num. 35:30.

Zebulun, 33:18; Gen. 49:13.
Zered, 2:13; Num. 21:12 ff.
Zin, 32:51; Num. 33:36.

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